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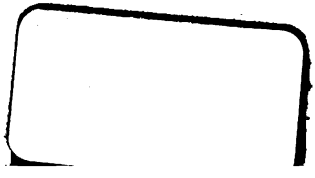

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. HANNAH MORE.

SEELEYS, THAMES DITTON, SURREY.

Yours very sincerely
H More

*From the picture painted by Opie in 1786
now in the possession of Lady Theresa Lewis*

Pub.d by H.B. Sotheby & W. Garnsey 11 Pall Mall Nov.r 1.1807

MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. HANNAH MORE:

BY WILLIAM ROBERTS, ESQ.

THIRD EDITION;

REVISED, WITH AN ADDITIONAL PREFACE.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

VERY few words by way of Preface can be necessary to a work that sufficiently explains itself, and requires no apology for its appearance. It may be satisfactory, however, to apprise the reader that, as Mrs. H. More could not but foresee that an account of her life, in this age of biography, must inevitably, with or without authority, come before the public after her death, it was natural for her to be desirous that the care of her memory should be committed to those whose intimate knowledge of her opinions, principles, and connections, would secure her character from misrepresentation and mistake.

In a letter to Sir W. Pepys, after expressing herself concerning her two friends to whom this trust had been committed, and into whose hands her sister Mrs. Martha More had consigned her large collection of letters, in terms which it is not of importance to repeat in this place, Mrs. Hannah More makes the following communication; 'I have made them my executrixes. My dear sister (unknown then to me) committed to them my posthumous reputation. I should be happy to think that nothing would be said of me, when I was for ever out of hearing; but I believe it was the only way to stop less qualified persons. I will always remain entirely ignorant of all that has been done even by them.' In page 264 of the fourth volume of this work, may be seen Sir W. Pepys's answer to this communication.

It pleased the Great Ruler of events to take to himself one of the executrixes a few months before the death

of Mrs. More, and the survivor thought proper to request the Editor to undertake the task of recording to the world the particulars of a life to which the world had been so greatly indebted.

It may be as well to add, that so great has been the mass of letters and papers, which in consequence of the above-mentioned designation of this important trust, has come to the hands of the Editor, that no pains were necessary, had it been his object, to extend this work to an unreasonable or inconvenient length. His difficulty has consisted in reducing his materials within the present compass. And it may not be improper to take this opportunity of stating, for the sake of obviating any suspicion of mercenary motives in the publication of so voluminous a collection, that all the proceeds of the sale of the copyright, beyond the costs and charges incident to the preparation of the work for the press, are destined to charitable purposes, and will be so applied.

Having endeavoured with as much assiduity as pressing occupations of a very different kind would allow, to do justice to the character and merit of the distinguished person he has brought before the public, and having anxiously studied to avoid offending the feelings or delicacy of any of those whose names occur in the course of the ensuing correspondence, if the Editor cannot say with Johnson that he dismisses the work 'with frigid indifference,' he can at least say with truth, that so long as neither the fame of Mrs. Hannah More, nor the cause with which it stands connected, has suffered detriment by passing through his hands, he dismisses the work without any unbecoming anxiety, (unbecoming at his time of life,) as to the result of his trial before the dispensers of critical justice.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE First Edition of this work, consisting of two thousand copies, having been exhausted within three weeks from the publication, a new impression is now offered to the public, having passed through the hands of the Editor, who has gladly availed himself of the opportunity it has afforded him of making the work more worthy of its subject by many corrections of errors of the press, as well as of his own inadvertencies.

Whether the publishers have over-estimated the attractions of these volumes by again sending forth the same numerous impression, remains to be seen; but the acceptance which it has already found has satisfactorily shewn that the country still holds its old principles in some honour, and that the name of Hannah More still attracts that attention which, in a manner, belongs to it by the 'Courtesy of England.'

The Editor takes this occasion to notice a letter received by him after this second edition had gone to press, from one of the grand-daughters of the late Dr. Langhorne, which offers some reasons for doubting the validity of the charge of intemperance which has been brought against his memory. Her vindication is principally grounded on the friendly terms in which he lived a little

before his death with some eminent characters, and his promotion to a prebend in the cathedral of Wells, only a year and a half before that event, by the Bishop of Bath and Wells. That a general impression so much to the disadvantage of so distinguished a character rests on such questionable grounds, is information which will be received with pleasure by those who feel a natural concern for the memory of departed genius.

Notwithstanding the observations introduced into the first volume of this work, to anticipate the impression which it was foreseen would be made upon the minds of many serious persons, by the light and unspiritual intercourse in which Mrs. Hannah More was engaged during the several years which immediately succeeded her first introduction to the societies of the metropolis, the Editor still finds himself called upon by animadversions which continue to be made by those whose concern for the consistency and completeness of the Christian character entitle them to respect, to repeat that it never was his intention by means of selections and suppressions, to carve out of Mrs. More's correspondence and intercourse, a perfect model of Christian excellence. His purpose has simply been to make an honest exhibition of character—to bring before the world this distinguished woman as she really was when she mixed with it, when she sympathized with it, and when she overcame it;—and to present to those who delight to dwell on every token of grace and providence, a case wherein by a mysterious agency a fellow mortal more than ordinarily endowed, has been carried through great temptaions and trials to an exemplary eminence in the attainments of practical religion. The work is designed for use rather than ornament; not as a panegyric upon flesh and infirmity, but as an illustration of the gracious dealings of HIM "whose

eye is upon them that fear him, and upon them that hope in his mercy."

If it be still remarked, and, no doubt, such is the opinion of some, that in the latter period of the life of Mrs. More, expressions, quotations, and allusions continued to escape from her pen, which bore the marks of her early associations, let it be recollected that religion, even in its more advanced state, will often in outward circumstances, and habitual characteristics, reflect something of the thoughts and sentiments which had an antecedent existence in the mind in its early days of susceptibility and inexperience. After much care and watering has been bestowed, and even the increase has come, the soil may yet retain a shade of its original colour, and the produce a relish of its primitive flavour.

Mrs. More who has shewn by her secret self-abasing confessions, preserved in these volumes, in what light she regarded her own merits, would have warned the world against the biographer whom she knew to entertain the design of publishing only a selected portion of her history: and those who know the true uses of biography, will thank the Editor, if they thank him for nothing else, for his open and integral display of the correspondence and intercourse of the interesting subject of his memoir. If he errs in his judgment, he trusts he does not mistake or mis-state his own principles, when he declares himself incapable of presenting Mrs. Hannah More to the world either better or worse than she has shewn herself to be by her letters, her life, and her labours.

The inspired biographers have set us an example which we shall do well to imitate. The sacred volume presents to man his own nature in its true condition of humiliation and corruption—unstable in his best estate, and only strong with his stay upon God. Truth is

greatly to be preferred to the gratification of a sentimental refinement; and the biographer is justly suspected, when he gives us a specimen which has no accordance with the testimonies of our inward experience.

It is for those who by the misapplication of talents have left the world more vicious than they found it, to have their lives blazoned by others who succeed to their places and opinions. Let us leave them 'alone with *their* glory.' It is another sort of glory with which the memory of Hannah More is surrounded—the glory of her own humble confessions, accompanying her Christian graces, and labours of love.

One thing is clear—that it would have been found impossible, if it had been attempted, to garble the letters of Mrs. More so as to have pleased or satisfied all tastes and opinions. The seeds of character which are sown in childhood are to some of little interest; others pay less regard to the fruits of antiquated experience; some look for ease, and some for effort; some for gravity, and some for gaiety; many object to the politics, and no small number to the religion of the writer; all will be apt to approve exclusively of so much of what they find in her letters as agrees with their own habits of thinking; meanwhile the Editor has thought it his duty steadily to follow the course of a correspondence so beautifully disclosing the stages of the Christian's advancement under divine teaching, from small beginnings, and through various trials, to victory and security.

From individual judgment, which takes every shape, the appeal properly lies to the great corporation of the reading public, whose collective sense will appear by their acceptance of the work; and it is hoped, if it makes its way through this mass of intelligence, its pro-

gress will in some degree be traced in its moral influence. If laws are becoming weak, and opinion strong,—if power is gradually passing from the few to the many, leaving its ancient settlements, to go with the throng in the great levelling march of its numerical and aggregate force, whatever has a tendency to rectify the common judgment, to lead the people to clearer perceptions of what belongs to their peace, and to counteract the effects of wicked counsel, deserves to be candidly, if not favourably received by the parent, the patriot, and the philanthropist;—and this is the best apology which the Editor can offer for the publication of the life and correspondence of HANNAH MORE.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

HAVING, in a preface to each of the preceding editions of this work, already obtruded myself too much upon the public, I had no intention to make a further experiment on its patience by any additional observations, either on the Memoir itself, or my own personal part in it. But some circumstances have occurred since the second edition made its appearance, to bring me reluctantly again to the task of explanation and defence. Perhaps, indeed, the simple fact of a third edition being so soon called for, after the publication of two such large impressions, ought to make me feel that as I have been using an instrument of some power in influencing practice and opinions, it becomes me to be at all times ready to protect its character and tendency from misrepresentation or mistake.

That attempts would be made to depreciate such a work was the more to be expected, as a whole life has been laid open to the scrutiny of the public, in its different periods and stages of struggle and advancement. With this consequence before me, I have, nevertheless, thought it my duty to produce the genuine correspondence of Mrs. More, without that scrupulous care in the selection which might have been expedient, had my purpose been to present a faultless model to the reader. I have chosen to make what seemed to be the fairest use of my materials, with a full knowledge not

only of the advantage which would be taken of this open practice by adversaries, but of the offence it might possibly give to some miscalculating friends. It was my object to produce not a work of art, but a record of truth,—such as might deserve the name of biography;—an honest history of a life, little diversified by outward circumstances, but affording an interesting development of internal character,—exhibiting the alternate ascendancy of truth and flattery,—'the rudiments of the world' resisting the call to a higher destiny, and a contest ending, after various success, in final victory.

Although I am far from thinking that every letter of a distinguished person becomes by his death the property of the public, or that the respect due to the departed is to give place to the rational curiosity, or even to the moral improvement of the living, yet I cannot but regard it as deceptious to cull those letters for publication, which exhibit a partial view of character, whether it be for praise or censure, or for a purpose which is equally false and more pernicious, the support of an editor's own particular opinions. If it may be done for the promotion of what is good and useful, the same right may be claimed by the advocates of what is dangerous and unsound; and thus by sorting a correspondence, almost any cause may be served out of the same stock of materials. Mrs. More has herself some lively remarks upon the posthumous abuse of such instruments in the hands of a disingenuous editor. "I am not satisfied," she observes, "with the life of Mrs. Carter, nor much pleased with her reviewer. The biographer, in order to do away the terrors of her piety and learning, has laboured to make her a woman of the world; and produced no less than five letters to prove that she subscribed to a ball;—he respects her fond-

ness for cards as much as if they were her passport to immortality. Every novel-reading Miss will now visit the circulating library with a warrant from Mrs. Carter."

This simplicity of plan and purpose has been carried through the whole work. Not only have the letters of Mrs. More been honestly laid before the reader, but her words have been neither softened nor suppressed. As there never was a more natural person, in the good sense of that term, it has been the biographer's care to exhibit the real woman; and to let her stand identified before her country as she ordinarily lived, corresponded, and conversed. I have not to save her from the charge of inconsistency, kept back her letters to Mr. Horace Walpole. There are those who have disapproved of their publication. But as they belong to her life and character as much as any other similar products of her pen, they are given to the public without reserve. But let it not be forgotten, that so awed was this libertine in sentiment by the dignity and purity of Mrs. More's character and demeanour, that none of those gross or profane allusions which form so large a proportion of his worthless correspondence with his other friends, found their way into any of his letters to that lady; and the only banter with which he ever ventures to assail her, was that of addressing her by the title of Saint, or Holy Hannah, the cheap raillery of vicious and vulgar men, but which shows the general impression made on the mind of this loose and light-minded person by the example of his correspondent, before whom his ribaldry was dumb, and his ridicule confounded. I will admit, however, that this part of her conduct involved a certain degree of inconsistency, but where does perfect consistency prevail except among the spirits of the just before the throne,—having a common centre, and but one will and one attraction.

Room would be wanting for other matters on which the attention of the reader will be requested, were all the various animadversions of which this work has been the subject, to be answered in detail; but there is one on which a few words may, perhaps, be properly bestowed. It has been complained that Mrs. More takes but little notice of her parents in any part of her correspondence; and it is true, that in the published letters they are not often introduced, but it is forgotten that all letters on private and domestic topics have been withheld from the public, which, while they would have sufficiently manifested her filial attachment, would have supplied little entertainment or matter of general interest. She did, in fact, maintain a very affectionate intercourse with her parents. Nor are the published letters altogether silent on these subjects. In the course of the first volume, her father and mother are mentioned in terms of warm affection.

With respect to the general arrangement of the letters, I cannot but confess that, in looking through them before committing them this third time to the press, several of them appear to have been misplaced. To dispose in strict chronological order so great a mass of correspondence, in which Mrs. More's own letters are, for the most part, without dates, and therefore to be duly arranged only by being made to synchronize with the events to which they allude, was a task requiring much pains and patience, where such internal evidence was afforded, and in the great majority of instances no such evidence was to be obtained. In the second edition, the arrangement was improved, but constant occupation of another kind did not afford me the leisure requisite to the completion of the task. It will be found, however, that the letters flow in a clearer sequence in this third edition. A few connecting statements, and some few letters which appeared to be important as supplying facts and incidents

to make the allusions more intelligible and plain, have been added, and some blanks have been filled with the names of the persons intended, where there appeared to be no reason for the suppression, or any objection to the disclosure on the part of friends or relatives.

The reader should be apprised, that the Latin translation of Mrs. More's poem on Bishop Bonner's Ghost, was not the performance of the late James Hay Beattie. I have been informed, but too late for the erroneous statement to be corrected, that in the first, or privately circulated edition of J. H. Beattie's Essays and Fragments, 8vo. 1794, there is a different translation of that poem, said to have been composed 1789, "Amici jussu," but the poem inserted was the only one on the Ghost of Bonner found among Mrs. More's papers.

And now for the Quarterly Reviewer.

The numerous friends and admirers of Hannah More, and those who are kindly disposed towards her biographer, have been urgent with me to repel the attack of this unsparing enemy. I was reluctant to do it, well knowing that this sort of mischief is very transient, and that as soon as the malignant performance has spent its ephemeral breath, the carcase of the criticism is left to moulder amidst the heap of antecedent accumulations. It seemed also, that to one who has declared the Editor of Mrs. More's life to be of all men the most accomplished for the task of spoiling that which had been committed to his care, the sale of 2000 copies in the first three weeks of the publication, and of another 2000 in the course of the next three months, and that, too, of a work of four thick volumes, was a virtual answer;—an answer still growing and gathering strength by the publication of a third edition of 2000 more. It seemed hardly to be believed even upon the affirmation of the Quarterly Review, that a life and correspondence committed to the

management of one with whom no editor can dispute the palm in the art of robbing what he touches of its interest and entertainment, should still be attended with such extraordinary success. Whether the reviewer has succeeded in raising me from my mediocrity amidst the crowd of ordinary men to this 'bad eminence,' I know not; but it seems to be generally allowed that no mercenary, if such be the relation in which he stands to the Review, secretly bent on betraying the interests which he has been hired to maintain, could have wrought more successfully, than the writer of the article in question. In this, as in other things, extremes approximate. I have been much congratulated on the honour cast upon Mrs. More, and in some degree upon her editor, by the malice of this critic; in return, therefore, let me compliment him on the alchymy of that touch which has thus involuntarily given to words of calumnious import the value and effect of decided commendation.

These considerations were so many motives to silence and forbearance, to which was added a suspicion that the article in question could not have been the work of any hand entitled to provoke an answer; and if any misjudging friend has happened at any time to suggest the name of some person of scholar-like repute, I have thought the suspicion uncharitable, and injurious towards an order of society the members of which are implicitly bound to live far above the suspicion of such an effort of mean hostility.

In addition to these motives to forbearance, the reader will, perhaps, indulgingly permit me to say that advanced age, which has cured me of literary ambition and vexation, has put me out of the reach of reviewing malevolence, while it has greatly increased my inability and indisposition to enter the lists with a vizored knight, with whose stratagems I am but partially acquainted; or

to engage in a dark contest with an invisible person, who by his corporate style of 'we' and 'us' declares his name to be Legion, and may bring with him to the field I know not what invisible co-operation, besides the support which he tells us he possesses, of all "the *rational* and immense majority of the religious public.[1]"

But notwithstanding all those motives to silence, I thought it not right, nor sufficiently respectful to public opinion, to bear submissively, the imputation of being a shallow pretender to learning, for this I take to be the import of the Reviewer's language; and I could not but consider myself as implicated in a common cause with Mrs. More's memory, and the interests of truth and virtue. In the humble office of biographer, the only merit that could be claimed was that of fidelity, impartiality, and correct delineation; and the honour aspired to was nothing greater than that of being the instrument of placing an excellent example in its right position before the world, with the shade of it resting upon myself.

But the critic has discovered that Mrs. More and her biographer are alike tainted with fanaticism; nor scruples to call the latter a narrow-minded sectary. The truth is, as must appear to every reader of ordinary acquaintance with the great subject of man's salvation, that the writer of this article is ignorant beyond the reach of shame, of what it most imports him to know. Any Sunday-school lad would inform him, that what he calls a sect, is only our common Christianity, to be seen

[1] The Reader will be better qualified to estimate the force of this test of orthodoxy, and the good sense of the proposition that would find the authority for an established religion in the opinion of the 'rational majority,' after perusing the charge of the Rev. Dr. Dealtry, the Rector of Clapham, delivered by him at the Hampshire visitation in the Autumn of last year. Better temper, more discretion, and wiser views, are, probably, not to be found in any writings upon this great subject.

on the surface of the Gospel, but which has no attractions for him or his flippant fraternity. The Editor belongs to the same sect as the lady whose life he has delivered over to the entertainment of the public and the malice of the reviewer,—the sect which was first christened at Antioch, with whose Founder the reviewer seems but indifferently acquainted.

The charges to which the Reviewer has subjected himself in his gross attack, as well upon the Editor as upon the subject of the memoir, are those of ignorance, mis-statement, and suppression. The article in an early stage of it, produces a long passage from a letter of a lady who pretends to no literature, but may justly claim the respect which is due to sound intelligence and correct feeling, as having come from the pen of the Editor, and then proceeds to make it the subject of criticism. The cavils directed against this unaffected and unaspiring performance, are to the last degree spiteful and puerile. But of the criticism I do not complain; I content myself with the statement of the simple fact, that the diction treated with such triumphant scorn was not mine, known not to be mine by the Reviewer, and yet by him assumed to be mine. There may be divers names for such a proceeding, but in the vocabularies of justice and honour, there is but one.

I have been guilty, it seems, of a flagrant anachronism in the date of one of Dr. Langhorne's letters, who is made in 1775, to talk of his wife as living, the same having died in 1768; and true it is, his wife did die in 1768, and that still he speaks of a living wife in 1775; and why not, if he married again? and so in truth did Dr. Langhorne, whose second wife died in 1776, and thus the problem is solved. But what does all this signify? the work of misrepresentation is done, and the Reviewer's purpose is answered; retributive justice follows

at a slow pace, and attention is diverted to some fresh object of the critic's malevolence, before the shame of the exposure can overtake him. The Reviewer probably went to the Cyclopœdia, or to Anderson's British Poets, to see what he could find about Dr. Langhorne, and there he found the second wife, and the intemperance of Dr. Langhorne, side by side in the narrative; but this was a part of the story he did not want, it being necessary for his purpose, that the sobriety of Dr. Langhorne should be vindicated, and his second marriage expunged. Having let in as much of the truth as he wanted, the falling portcullis cuts the narrative in twain, excluding what was inconvenient, and leaving him master of the mutilated remainder, to do with it all his pleasure.

So careless or unfortunate is this Reviewer, that there is scarcely a fact adverted to by him throughout his performance, which he has not contrived to mistake or mis-state. In page 433 of the number of the Quarterly Review, in which his article appears, he quotes as Hannah More's, a saying of Mr. Owen Cambridge. He says, (p. 423,) that Garrick, pleased with a written account she had given of his acting, "sought the acquaintance of the writer, who, nothing loath, was *presently* all but domesticated beneath his roof," whereas the memoir, and her own letters state, that her introduction to Mr. Garrick took place in the winter of 1773-4, and that her prolonged visits at his house commenced in 1776.

Again, he tells his readers that the letter to Mrs. Gwatkin (vol. i. p. 38.) is given as the first she wrote from London, whereas no such thing is said, but merely that such letter, bearing no date, appears to have been among "her earliest;" and yet upon this assertion does he rest one of his minute and paltry censures.

He complains that "we are *left in the dark* as to the

great practical question, how far the scheme of the schools realized, in the issue, Hannah More's fervent anticipations." A man must be left in the dark as to the contents of a book he will not read, or reads only to misrepresent. A perusal of the twelfth chapter of Part III, or the third chapter of Part IV, would have dissipated his darkness, and given him the discomfort of seeing more than he wished.

Now and then an anachronism, and here and there a careless repetition, is triumphantly proclaimed by this minute examiner; and the occurrence of certain verbal inaccuracies in the first edition, (for the Reviewer seems not to have seen the second, and to have regularly read only a small part of the first) gave his ill-nature a repast. His plan appears to have been to teaze where he could not terrify, and by a crowd of petty cavils and multiplied charges, to distress at least what he could not destroy.

He has been neither wise nor penetrating in his observations, but having only the first edition in his hands, he has seen faults which can have escaped nobody, and less than any body, the writer himself. The work is chargeable with many inadvertences, which it is hoped have been since removed or rectified. But the Reviewer's title to chastise the Editor for instances of inaccuracy is forfeited by his own delinquencies of a similar kind. He may be too great a man to spell Mrs. Montagu's name rightly, or to give Mrs. More's residence its proper designation, but he does not maintain his importance by treating with contempt the little incidents of the childish days of such a woman. Whatever he may think of the value of these petty records, the admirers of that lady would not have been satisfied with the omission of any of them, and it may be questioned whether this sapient critic will leave upon record any act of his maturity which will interest posterity more, or better deserve to be registered, unless

he can make up his mind to confess his injustice, and publish his recantation. Let it be remembered that this Memoir was not prepared for the entertainment of Quarterly Reviewers, nor these little incidents offered to the notice of such important personages, but intended for readers of ordinary humanity—for those who can condescend to be pleased with a correspondence once lighted up by so many luminaries, of which Hannah More was the shining centre.

Hostility to the memory of Hannah More was in the Quarterly Review an act of consistency. I do not complain of it. But I charge him with being an unmanly enemy. The article in question affords the clearest proofs in support of this allegation. Amidst professions of great respect, slanders which the critic seems ashamed to adopt, he is not ashamed to insinuate; and I shall not stoop to the vindication of one, who always disdained to use any other defence than the dignity of her deportment, the transparency of her principles, and the consistency of her life.

I will only advert to a specimen or two of the Reviewer's mode of resuscitating calumnies which had ceased to breathe, unless in the gross atmosphere of vicious and ignorant vulgarity. Speaking of the proposal of marriage, and the rupture of the treaty, the critic says, "In spite of those rumours to the contrary, which took so preposterous a shape in the table-talk of Lord Byron, we doubt not that Miss More's part in the transaction was blameless." Now had Lord Byron been asked what he really meant, would he not of course have answered: "What can I know of a person whom I never saw, with whose personal history I am wholly unacquainted, and who was an old woman before I was sent to school." And was it becoming in a writer in a journal professing to be moral and conservative, to allude in terms of

equivocal unbelief to rumours which, in fact, had no existence but in the loose fancy of a reckless jester upon all that he now knows to be supremely solemn. More useful and honourable, surely, had it been for the Quarterly Review, had it felt it to be its duty, as it really was, to discountenance, which it never did, the many mischievous products of that noble pen which issued from time to time, to the manifest injury of the public morals, from the same press, and the same mart, which sent out into the world the fruits of their own periodical labours.

The critic ends his remarks on the matrimonial treaty between Mr. Turner and Mrs. More, with observing that that passage in Mrs. More life "requires elucidation," leaving it to be understood that in his view it has not been satisfactorily explained. But what further facts could with propriety or delicacy be called for. A contract of marriage was formed between Hannah More and Mr. Turner. In a wayward mood he first suspended, and then wished to renew the engagement. Disgusted with this unseemly conduct, the intercourse was discontinued, and finally determined by the act of the lady herself, and her friends. The sensibility with which the circumstances of this affair were felt by her, was shown in her determination to listen to no other proposals; her adherence to which determination was soon after put to the test. Every thing in relation to this delicate subject was settled by Sir James Stonehouse, whose name ought at once to satisfy an inquirer as to the perfect purity of a transaction in which he took a zealous and conspicuous part. I will not soil my page with even a notice, however slight, of some common-place jesting in which this Reviewer has thought it consistent with the character he has assumed, to indulge.

The Reviewer brings the charge of flattery against Mrs. More; and it is readily conceded that a system

of mutual adulation is but too observable in the correspondence in which she was engaged. It was, indeed, the faulty habit of some even of the most virtuous and honourable characters of the time in which Hannah More moved ostensibly in the world; but let the reader say whether the imputation attaches most upon her or her friends. If Garrick and Johnson, Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Carter, Bishop Lowth and Bishop Horne poured in upon her daily the language of encomium, should it excite wonder that an individual relatively circumstanced as she was, should think herself bound to respond to these courtesies and praises in a somewhat similar strain. But the Reviewer has so represented the case as to make Hannah More sustain the entire obloquy of this general habit. "Nothing, certainly," says he, "can be more fulsome than the style in which the letters now published shew her to have bespattered Garrick, Johnson, Mrs. Montagu, and the leading blue-stockings." Yes, surely, if *fulsome* be the right epithet, the manner in which others *bespattered her* was much more fulsome. But I adopt neither of these terms in reference to any of those eminent persons. They belong to Quarterly Reviewers, together with many other words of the like vituperative value, by right of occupancy and usage.

But upon what does the reviewer principally found his accusation? Upon two passages in Boswell's Johnson. If there were a dozen such passages, their accumulated weight would after all be trifling, for Boswell liked Mrs. More very little, and has been detected in a multitude of cases in gratifying his antipathies, by means of ill-natured expressions put by him into Johnson's mouth. (See the Notes to Croker's Boswell, *passim*.) The first of these passages is a blank in Boswell, and filled up, probably by guess, from some MS. notes of Malone's. The second will enable us to judge better

of all such tittle-tattle. It stands in Boswell without Mrs. More's name appearing in it; the phrase he uses being "a celebrated lady," and the story being as follows:—

"At Sir Joshua Reynolds's one evening, she met Dr. "Johnson. She very soon began to pay her court to him "in the most fulsome strain. '*Spare me, I beseech you*, "dear madam,' was his reply. She still laid it on. 'Pray, "madam, let us have no more of this,' he rejoined. Not "paying any attention to these warnings, she still con- "tinued her eulogy. At length, provoked by this in- "delicate and vain obtrusion of compliments, he exclaimed, "'Dearest lady, consider with yourself what your flattery "is worth, before you bestow it so freely.'"

Such is Boswell's story; and Boswell, be it remembered, had been, on one occasion at least, rather sharply handled by Hannah More. Now hear Miss Sarah More's evidence, herself having been present, writing a private letter to her sister, *not intended for publication*, and never, in fact, published, until sixty years afterwards.

"Tuesday evening we drank tea at Sir Joshua's with "Dr. Johnson. Hannah is certainly a great favourite. "She was placed next him, and they had the entire con- "versation to themselves. They were both in remarkably "high spirits, it was certainly her lucky night! I never "heard her say so many good things. The old genius was "extremely jocular, and the young one very pleasant. "You would have imagined we had been at some comedy "had you heard our peals of laughter. *They, indeed, tried "who could 'pepper the highest,' and it is not clear to me that "the lexicographer was really the highest seasoner.*"

This agrees well enough with the exclamation given by Boswell, "Spare me, Madam." The whole was clearly a contest of raillery. But will any one be-

lieve that if Hannah More had disgraced herself by "fulsome flattery," and had been roughly and openly rebuked for it by the Doctor,—her sister, writing in strict confidence to another sister, would have called it "her lucky night?"

With his usual candour and liberal bearing, the critic observes in another place, "We hope Mr. Croker is quite right in discrediting the story of the Doctor's ever having said, 'she did not gain upon him, she was an empty-headed woman.'" Had Johnson really said this, it would have been to his own disgrace, if the Quarterly Review has been right in the opinion it has been constrained by the voice of the public to pronounce concerning Mrs. More's "power over the resources of our language, her keen wit and lively fancy, devoted to the best and noblest purposes." The case stands thus: Mr. Boswell having gone with Dr. Johnson to Bath on the 26th of April, 1776, says, 'He would not allow me to praise a lady *then at Bath*,' observing 'she does not gain upon me, Sir, I think her empty-headed,' to which Mr. Croker appends the following note. "This has been supposed to be Miss Hannah More, yet it seems hard to conceive in what wayward fancy he could call her empty-headed."

Now I beg to ask the question of all straight-forward and plain-dealing men, how they like this method of defending a character from an undeserved imputation. One gentleman, taking up a contemptuous remark, said to have been made by a great man upon a lady, tells everybody who that lady was supposed to be, but adds, he cannot believe it to be meant for her; and then comes the kind Reviewer, who in his zeal for the lady, to whom the public attention had been thus directed, "hopes Mr. Croker is *quite right* in discrediting the story of the Doctor's having ever said 'She did not gain upon him,

she was an empty-headed woman.' How gratified the Reviewer will be to be informed that, on referring to Mrs. More's own correspondence, it will be seen that she was not *then at Bath*, (in April, 1776) but was resident in London from January, 1776, to the June of that year; and therefore could not have been the lady *then at Bath*, to whom the Doctor's sarcasm applied. I claim the thanks of my critic for thus shewing him that Mr. Croker was *quite right* in discrediting the story as relating to Mrs. More.

So much for the principal attacks which have been made with, I trust, their deserved success upon the memory of the distinguished lady whose character I have presumed to present to the public through the medium chiefly of her edifying and brilliant correspondence.

If I have succeeded in *her* defence, it little signifies what this Reviewer may say concerning *me*; and I can assure him, that had he not involved me in the controversy concerning persons and questions of more importance, he would never have provoked me to contend with him. As it is, I am constrained to appear before him, not a jot the better for his castigation, not a jot less accomplished for deteriorating whatever I touch, not a step removed from my sectarian prejudices, not advanced an inch towards that holy ground trodden by "the rational and immense majority of the religious public."

But leaving this theologian to the blessings and comforts of his own creed, which he has proved to be the best in the world by the shew of hands in its favour, and the suffrages of the "*rational* majority," I pass to another topic, which, alas! involves me in the reproach of both fraud and folly. It really did not occur to me that I had no right to meddle with the memory of Dr. Johnson and that I must pay the forfeiture of my presumption

if I dared to claim him from the "immense and rational majority" for my bigotted *sect*. The Quarterly Reviewers had enshrined him in their own sanctuary, and sainted him in their own calendar, and no legend concerning him was to be believed but upon their authority.

The Reviewer supposes me to be unacquainted with the fact of Dr. Johnson's belief in the propitiatory sacrifice, or the piety of some of his devotional compositions. Now I know all this as well as he does. I am aware of Dr. Johnson's belief in the nature, character, and cross of the Saviour: but I know also, that there is a substantial difference between the different classes of professing believers in their views of the peculiar character of the Gospel dispensation. *He* does not know, or will not acknowledge, that it is one thing to admire the morality of the Gospel, to trust to a general expectation of mercy, and to look for the rewards of our righteous acts and resolutions; and another to have an awakening conviction of our own unworthiness, of the extent of the penalty which had been incurred, of our need of pardoning grace, and of our sole dependence on the reconciliation wrought for us by the atoning blood of a self-substituted offering of infinite worth, and sinless perfection.

The last mentioned view of the Gospel, was that of Hannah More, and I may perhaps add, is that of Mrs. More's biographer. All sectary and bigot as the Reviewer thinks me, I dare with this confession of faith, declare myself a son of our Established Church, and proclaim my hope that as "I was born in the lap of this mother, I may die in her bosom," and that if her days of mourning are at hand, it may be my privilege to follow her into the wilderness, and wait upon her there.

After all, there is a sect alluded to by the Apostle to which I trust my Reviewer does not belong—the "ψυχικοι, πνευμα μη εχοντες," and who would not be

glad to rescue the memory of Dr. Johnson from the remotest participation in the character of *that* sect?

Will not my Reviewer himself, when he comes to reflect a little seriously upon the subject, forgive my presumption in giving publicity and permanence to an anonymous letter found among Mrs. More's papers, written in a style and spirit calculated to produce in candid minds a strong persuasion of the veracity of its statements; in which the death-bed of Dr. Johnson exhibits the powerful effects of the Spirit's work in dissipating in the loftiest mind, all grounds of self-confidence, and every false support of human construction. In this letter the Rev. Mr. Storry, of truly pious memory, is introduced as the relator of some facts respecting Johnson's last days which seemed to be worth recording. He relates, that Dr. Johnson, when drawing towards the close of his existence, expressed his wish to see a clergyman, and described the views and character of the person he was desirous of consulting. After some consideration a Mr. Winstanley was named, and the Doctor desired Sir John Hawkins to write a note in his name, requesting Mr. Winstanley's attendance as a minister. Then follows the account given by Mr. Storry of the very weak state of Mr. Winstanley's nerves in his then declining state of health, and his inability, after much struggle with himself, to overcome his dread of visiting a person of Dr. Johnson's intellectual eminence in the character of an instructor. Mr. Winstanley's sentiments and suggestions for the consolation of the dying man were communicated by letter, and appeared to make their due impression upon his mind.

My offence consists in my having given publicity to this anonymous letter, with little or no comment from my own pen; though I might have adverted to the many reasons which exist, for inferring that towards the

closing scene of his life, Dr. Johnson's views of evangelical and vital truth, became more scriptural and humble than those of the respectable and eminent persons, whose attendance upon him at this period the writers of his life have exclusively recorded, and it may be added, than those which appear to have been entertained by himself during the course of his useful and instructive career, when attention waited upon his accents, and his dogmas were received as decrees. Upon the above particulars, as well as all that has appeared in the Christian Observer, respecting the late Mr. Latrobe's visits to, and communications with Dr. Johnson, the Reviewer passes a summary sentence:—they constitute altogether a "bungling piece of quackery," and "a pious fraud," and according to this intuitive judge, "there was not a shadow of reason for believing Mrs. More to have attached any importance to the contents of the anonymous sheet in question."

To this last assertion, grounded upon no pretence of actual knowledge, may be opposed the assertions of others who have heard Mrs. More speak of the "anonymous sheet" in question, as being a document of great interest and importance; nor can the contrary be inferred from her forbearance to publish it, till it is known upon what terms she was furnished with a copy of it.

I have been provoked by the contemptuous challenges of the Reviewer, to make some efforts to ascertain the author of the document so stigmatized. From the Rector of Great Tey, in Essex, son of the late Mr. Storry, of Colchester, I have been favoured with a letter which gives the following account of it.

"In the year 1823, I was visiting Mr. Storry of Emberton, Bucks, and there it was that I first saw a copy of the letter which has excited so much attention. A transcript which I made of it is now lying before me,

and it differs in no material point from that which you have published. It purports to be an extract from a letter, addressed to Lady Lifford, by the Rev. J. Sangar, Curate of Colne Engayne, near Colchester, a talented and excellent man, who was intimate with my family, and frequently preached for my father. At a subsequent period he officiated at St. Werburgh's, Bristol, and died on the 4th July, 1818, in the full possession of Christian hope. In the correspondence of Colonel Pownall with my father, frequent mention is made of Mr. Winstanley, the account of whose health quite coincides with that given in Mr. Sangar's letter. A letter from Colonel Pownall, dated February 11, 1789, says, 'Poor Mr. Winstanley is no more; he is removed from a world, where he had but little comfort, I trust and hope to a better.'

I will not degrade the memory of Mr. Sangar, by pleading for it in the court of these critics. He was far above the fabrication of a falsehood, or the suspicion of it, as those who remember him, and there are many that do, are ready to testify. So much for the 'anonymous sheet,' as the Reviewer calls it, which has now a name and character to substantiate its credit. And now the credibility of the narrative rests upon Mr. Storry, whose memory wants no vindication, but shall not be deprived of the honour cast upon it by a testimony which none will distrust or dispute. The following is an extract from a letter to the Editor, from William Gray, Esq. of York. "Should you need any testimony to the veracity of the Rev. Mr. Storry as a narrator, I can give this. While at York and Hull, under preparation for the ministry, the Rev. Joseph Milner, the Rev. William Richardson, and myself, became intimately acquainted with him. The fact I have to mention, grounded on that intimacy, was Mr. Storry's peculiar veracity, and talent

for narrative. He had not a ray of warm imagination to play upon his memory, nor was he a man of much reading, but he dealt largely in social intercourse, which he applied more conscientiously to religious purposes, than almost any person I ever knew. In his oral communications, and his narrations especially, Mr. Richardson and I used to admire his memory and precision: his correctness we never had the least reason to question. He was the very person to collect and detail the particulars relating to Dr Johnson and Mr. Winstanley, which you give in your work.

"I did not know before of the attack by the Quarterly Review, for I do not read that publication, but I wonder not at it. It is quite in the spirit of that work. When I read your narrative, (a digression certainly, but too important to be omitted, with such a document presenting itself,) I foreboded an attack."

I dismiss the subject of the 'anonymous sheet,' which I think is now out of the reach of its anonymous defamer, with a few words concerning Mr. Winstanley. He was a Master of Arts of Trinity College, Cambridge; became Rector of St. Dunstan's in the East, in January 1771; and died in 1789, after a Christian course exercised by many trials, and a ministry accompanied with much profit to those who attended it. It suits the Reviewer to call this person "*a young clergyman*," without knowing more of his age than of the colour of his hair, of whom the Rev. Mr. Crabbe thus speaks in his Memoir of his father, the Poet. "This eminently respectable clergyman died in 1789." And then produces the following testimony from his Father's correspondence:—"I give you a short abstract of a sermon preached this morning, by my favourite clergyman of St. Dunstan's. There is nothing particular in it, but had you heard the good man, reverend in appearance, and with a hollow slow voice deliver

it,—a man who seems already half way to heaven, you would have joined with me in wondering people call it dull and disagreeable to hear such discourses." So much for the '*young* clergyman,' and so much for the 'sectarian and methodistical' sources from which this anecdote is derived.

As the Editor of these Memoirs, I have no direct concern with Dr. Johnson's memory, but as the Quarterly Reviewer has taken occasion from the production of the letter containing Mr. Storry's narrative, to cast discredit upon all that has been said of the change of the religious views of that eminent person towards the conclusion of his life, and especially of the late Mr. Latrobe's intercourse with him, I will add a few words on that subject.

The cordial respect entertained by Dr. Johnson for the late Mr. Latrobe, and the dignity and worth of that Christian minister's character, are facts well known and remembered. It is well known, too, that Mr. Latrobe was unlikely to neglect his opportunities of turning the thoughts of his dying friend to the true condition of his soul, and of intercepting the fallacious comfort which others were finding for him in a complacent review of his meritorious life. Mr. Latrobe was, in truth, much in Christian communion with Dr. Johnson: not, certainly, when Sir John Hawkins, or Dr. Brocklesby, or others were attending upon him, but at times when the world and its blandishments were silenced and suspended. But, says the Reviewer with his usual flippancy, "All Mr. Latrobe's part in the affair was, that he called at Dr. Johnson's three days before his death, but did not see the Doctor, (See Croker's Boswell, vol. v. p. 322)." Now, in a letter to the Editor of the Christian Observer, published in January 1828, from the Rev. C. I. Latrobe, now living, the testimony of his father is pre-

served respecting the state of Dr. Johnson's mind, as gathered from his frequent interviews with him in the concluding period of his life. 'Dr. Johnson,' continues Mr. C. I. Latrobe, 'during his last illness, had sent his servant every day to our house, to know when my father, who was absent from London, would come back, with a request that he would attend him, and I wrote frequently, to urge him to hasten his return for that purpose. The moment he arrived, he went to the Doctor's house, but found him speechless, though quite sensible. My father affectionately directed him to the only Saviour, and to dependence on his merits and atonement alone, and reminded him of the only source of true repose in life and death. The Doctor showed by pressing his hand, and other signs, that he well understood and thankfully received the address.' Such is the statement so pertly remarked on by the Reviewer. But let the grandson of Mr. Latrobe, the present Rev. J. A. Latrobe be heard. In a letter lately received from him, he says:—

"My father's memory failed him, when he asserted "that 'his father returned to London only the day pre-"ceding the Doctor's death;'—as it appears from written "documents, which we possess, that he returned Dec. the "8th; and as the Doctor died on the 13th, there were *five* "*days*, during which it is more than probable, my grand-"father, whose visit Johnson had so earnestly desired, "would call many times, though my father, who felt "no particular interest at that time in the circumstance, "did not mark them with sufficient attention. As to the "other mistake—the assertion that Dr. Johnson died in "the *morning*, when it turns out he died in the *evening*, "that he was *speechless*, when it appears from Mr. Hoole's "diary, only *that he spoke to nobody*—(Croker's Boswell, "iv. 473)—no person of any candour, considering the "circumstances, could for a moment adduce them as "disproving the general accuracy of the statement. That

"Mr. Hoole makes no mention of any other visit to Dr. J. "than *one*, (Dec. 10) can be considered of little weight, "as he would mention the names only of such visitors as "happened to call while he was there. Stripping my "father's account therefore of the acknowledged inac- "curacies—the fact seems to have been that my grand- "father, when he arrived in town, visited the Doctor "as soon as possible; was not able to see him at first, "(see Hoole's Diary) but ultimately did see him shortly "before he died, though at that time he *spoke to no-* "*body.*—(Hoole's Diary). My grandfather's services "therefore to Johnson *on his death-bed*, it will be readily "allowed, amounted to nothing more than the few "words of comfort he may have uttered at the time, "upon which neither he nor his friends have laid any "weight. The value that Johnson set upon his religious "instructions, and his opinion of Johnson's religious "state, rest,—not upon an hour's conversation on a death- "bed, but upon an intimate acquaintance of some years, "for which fact, Boswell may be a sufficient autho- "rity, though others might be adduced. Of course his capa- "bility of ministering in such matters will be variously "estimated. Those who, like the Quarterly Reviewer, "deem that real religion consists in a mere head-con- "viction of "the propitiatory sacrifice," and that any "suggestions as to the unsoundness of a reliance upon such "a conviction while the heart is uninfluenced, is an in- "sinuation to the disparagement of "the rational and "immense majority of the religious public in this country— "their faith and their practice,"—will necessarily reject "his opinion as 'enthusiastical and sectarian;'—those, "on the other hand, who "have not so learned Christ," "but know from their own experience, that "faith worketh "by *love*," will rejoice to have the attestation of a man "of my grandfather's well-known piety and spiritual dis- "cernment to the fact, that the eyes of so decided a "formalist as Johnson were opened to see his need of a "Saviour, and his soul brought to seek rest—not in his "prayers, meditations, and self-righteous resolutions—but,

" where Mary found it, sitting at Jesus' feet, and hearing " his words. Nor will such be inclined to reject my father's " declaration of what he himself heard from my grand- " father's own lips, on account of some trivial mistakes " of memory. As for the opinions of men so prejudiced " and party-coloured as the writer in the Quarterly Re- " view, there is in them so little, even of an appearance " of impartiality, that I cannot conceive them to have " much weight, even among those for whom they are " intended."

Such are the principal circumstances belonging to the intercourse of the late Mr. Latrobe with Dr. Johnson, to the consideration of which I have been drawn, not certainly by my general subject, but by the unmannerly and unwarrantable observations of the Reviewer upon the publication of what he calls the "anonymous sheet" found among Mrs. More's papers.

It is rather curious by the way to remark, that this gentleman quarrels with all who dare talk of " the conversion" of Dr. Johnson, whereas, in truth, that expression is used, not by any of the persons against whom his anger is directed, but *by Dr. Johnson himself.* At page 335, of the fifth volume of Mr. Croker's work, is found a prayer composed by Johnson eight days before his death, in which the Doctor emphatically thus prays, " Forgive, and accept my *late conversion.*"

The passage in which the Reviewer raves most ridiculously on the subject of Dr. Johnson, and quarrels most seriously with Mrs. More's biographer on his account, is the following:—

" The attempt to persuade us that Dr. Johnson's mind was not made up as to the great fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion, until it was enforced on him, in extremis, by sectarian or methodistical zeal, cannot redound to the credit of Mr. Roberts's understanding. If

he had condescended to read the Doctor's own 'Prayers and Meditations,' he would have found him to have been, as far back as his religious feelings can be traced, fully convinced of the *propitiatory sacrifice*. In the prayer on his birthday, transcribed himself thirty years afterwards, he expressly states his hope of salvation to be 'through the satisfaction of Jesus Christ.' And as in this faith he lived, so undoubtedly he died."

Now, in the first place, all that the Reviewer has affirmed with respect to my own part in this affair, is the creation of his fancy administering to his malice. He accuses me of making an 'attempt to persuade people that Dr. Johnson's mind was not made up as to the great fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion until it was enforced on him by sectarian or methodistical zeal.' I have attempted to *persuade* nobody of anything, but have produced the letter in question, as an interesting document, and deserving of attention, leaving it perhaps too bare, rather than otherwise of comment.

With respect to the great man, who seems to lose something of his greatness in passing through the hands of this officious friend, it seems not to be understood, that while it is fully admitted that Dr. Johnson had, throughout his life, a decided belief in what the Reviewer calls 'the atonement,' and 'the propitiatory sacrifice,' it may be, and is the opinion of some of the best informed upon this subject, that until shortly before his departure, this doctrine, though professedly embraced by the great moralist in the abstract, and as a formal truth, occupied a low, false, and unscriptural place in his religious system;—that it is one thing to entertain a belief of the fact of the atonement, and another to make that right application, and self-appropriation of it, which constitutes real, saving, and sanctifying Christianity.

Now of both these states of mind there is the most

satisfactory ground for believing that Dr. Johnson had experience—that he halted some time between the two—and that finally, to the comfort and repose of his soul, he settled in that which ascribed the whole work of his gratuitous redemption to the miracle of the cross.

Nothing could bear stronger testimony to the change alluded to, than the different aspects under which death presented itself to his thoughts at the different stages of his Christian progress. In the February of his last year, 1784, he had told Sir John Hawkins, 'with a look that 'cut him to the heart, that he had the prospect of death before him, and that he dreaded to meet his Saviour.' But in the December of the same year, he speaks to the same friend of 'the loathing he had felt of sin, and of himself,' and adds, 'at these times I have had such rays of hope shot into my soul, as have almost persuaded me that I am in a state of reconciliation with God.' (Croker's Boswell, vol. v. p. 333.)

Henceforward, the Saviour, who had before appeared to him as a kind of teacher of a system of salvation by works mixed with repentance, becomes *salvation itself* to him. His petitions are now no longer for 'ability to fulfil the *conditions* of salvation,' but he thus prays, 'Grant, O Lord, that my *whole hope and confidence* may be in his merits, and in thy mercy; forgive and accept my late conversion; enforce and accept my imperfect repentance.' (Vol. v. p. 335.)

His will commences with the solemn declaration, 'I bequeath to God a soul polluted by many sins, but I hope purified by Jesus Christ.' Boswell adds, 'Dr. Brocklesby, who will not be suspected of fanaticism, obliged me with the following account:—

'For some time before his death, all his fears were calmed and absorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his trust in the merits and propitiation of Jesus Christ.'

The same writer supplies us with the statement of those who attended him during the last twelve hours of his life:

'At the interval of each hour they assisted him to sit up in his bed, and to move his legs, which were in much pain, when he regularly addressed himself to fervent prayer. He said his mind was prepared, and the time of his dissolution seemed long. No man could appear more collected, more devout, and less terrified at the thoughts of the approaching minute.'

And this was the man who, but a few months before, could not bear the most distant allusion to death, and was filled with dread at the thought of "hearing that sentence of which there is no revocation."

Most assuredly he did *not* 'die as he lived,' for he lived in a vain and fruitless endeavour to work out a justification for himself by his own obedience, but he died 'loathing himself' for his 'sins and pollutions,' and trusting simply to the cross. He lived amidst terrors and alarms at the thoughts of death; he died collected, devout, unterrified, thinking the 'time to his dissolution to be long.' This was not dying as he lived, except in the confused apprehension which the Reviewer seems to entertain of all these distinct marks and indications of the progress of religion in the soul.

Those who have leisure and curiosity to sift this controversy further, will find in the Christian Observer for the years 1827, 1828, 1831, and 1832, the particulars of Dr. Johnson's acceptance of the humbling truths of the gospel, awakening him to the fullest perception and acknowledgment of his own sinfulness, and sending him to the cross of the Saviour, with nothing to plead but that Saviour's merits; and for a full, spiritual, and masterly discussion concerning the indications of an important change in the mind of Dr. Johnson towards the close of

his life, I refer with great pleasure to the "Christian Essays," by the Rev. S. C. Wilks.

From the facts and observations occurring in the important and able journal above alluded to, it may with great satisfaction be collected, that there was a portion of Dr. Johnson's life and interior character, of which many of his admiring friends were ignorant: they did not see it, or they did not comprehend it; or, if they did comprehend it, they did not seem to consider it as useful for their purpose, being in bad keeping with that picturesque exhibition of character, which they knew to be most attractive and entertaining in description.

I was just about to take leave, and the thought was really refreshing, of this vain and supercilious adversary, when it struck me as almost necessary to the ends of justice, to lay before my readers an instance or two of the tone and spirit of his verbal criticisms, and of the Quarterly manner, for I cannot find a term that better denotes it, of his cutting up his victim. After some observations illustrative of his opinion of the true test of orthodoxy, namely, the determination of "the rational and immense majority of the religious public," he thus proceeds, "a more serious and prevailing mischief is, that Mr. Roberts takes part with nothing but the peculiar views and sect to which Mrs. H. More, in the latter years of her life, lent the distinction of her too exclusive favour." Let the reader look to her correspondence and associates towards the close of her existence, and he will judge of the propriety of this observation of the critic.

Hannah More is represented as remarking in allusion to her father's mode of instruction, that "the conversation of an enlightened parent or preceptor constituted one of the best parts of education." Upon which the Reviewer makes the following observation. "Imagine who can, that Hannah More had arrived at the recondite

dogma about education, which she appears to have taken such pains in enforcing upon the mind of her biographer, in consequence of her grateful recollection of those cabalistic intonations;" alluding to Mr. More's amusing his little daughter's ear with the sound of the Greek language. But what he can mean by the pains taken by Mrs. More to '*enforce her dogma about education on the mind of her biographer*,' I am quite at a loss to conjecture. He does not seem in this instance to have any clear design, but only a random sort of malevolence, too impatient to inflict injury to be capable of a steady aim.

Mrs. More had a certain tenderness respecting the use of terms which have been in a manner consecrated by religious associations, to express common notions and things. On her bed of sickness she mentions several of these forms of speech, to which her objections applied, as the 'Christening of a Ship,' the 'Salvation of the Country,' 'Resurrection Men,' 'Trinity Lane,' the 'Ascension of a Balloon,' &c. Now she may, perhaps, have been too nice in this objection, but does it deserve to be stigmatized as "a sad weakness?" Such as it was, it was based upon many instances, some stronger than others; but down comes again the portcullis of the Quarterly Reviewer, and cuts off all but the "Ascension of a Balloon," thus making his readers believe that the whole weight of Mrs. More's indignation rested upon this phrase, by which her peace of mind was disturbed. There is really a wickedness in all this, which it would be a waste of words to expose, and I cannot help thinking, that his reviewing habits have in this instance betrayed him into an affectation of acuteness with some cost and sacrifice to both his heart and head. It implies some pains-taking with himself to bring down the practice of a well-educated man to a style of criticism so low, so petulant, and so puerile.

I now retreat from this contention, disgusted, but, I trust, not disgraced. I shall retreat within the "library of the sect" to which the critic tells the public "my reading is confined." My sect is a very broad one—its distinguishing characteristic is the forgiveness of injuries; and though its library is not liberal enough to include the Quarterly Review, its charity is large enough to receive it within its bounds.

That same charity prompts in me a sincere wish that Reviewers may be brought to consider the meanness and dishonesty which belong to the character of a writer who makes literary justice his *pretence*, while to discredit and defame is his *purpose*—who carries hostility in his right hand, and in his left, partiality and injustice. I do not charge all this upon the critic on my own work, who has found in it, I most unaffectedly confess, much to justify censure, though not the sort of censure he has bestowed upon it; but I think it will be generally admitted that a Reviewer's occupation has a strong bearing towards the practice above alluded to. For these reasons, added to the necessarily superficial and deceptious character of the species of composition affected by this class of writers, I cannot but think that the harm done by it, is great beyond what is suspected. It steals away the mind from patient research, and dissipates its force by distracting its attention. But it does what is more injurious,—it gives the tone without the faculty of decision,—it teaches the mere craft of literature, without pointing to its true gains, or proper objects. In truth, our path is perplexed by the officiousness of our guides; our helps are multiplied into hindrances, and the march of intellect may be said to be incumbered with its commissariat.

If they are not too vain to reflect upon themselves, the consciences of these Reviewers must, I think, inform them how short is the transit from the mere cant of criti-

cism, to the conceit of knowledge; and by what a tricking process the labour of learning, and that which Hesiod calls 'the Sweat of Virtue,' is eluded in their schools of shallow wit, and imposing egotism. Parents, who know the humble and experimental process to which instruction must condescend, and the danger of premature and vagrant studies, will evince their prudence by keeping Reviews from their children, at least during the period of early discipline. They will be cautious of carrying them to such shallow streams, instead of leading them to those sources of wisdom in which the element is fresh, pure, and abundant. They will deem it unsafe to put a young judgment under the guidance of persons who write for pay or for party; or who, self-elected, assume a province in which the trust is as delicate as the duty is important.

Having thus presumed, for I feel it to be presumption, to offer my adversary some Christian and charitable hints, I will now part with him for ever with one final suggestion. Let him in lieu of childishly scoffing at Mrs. More's religion, strive to avail himself of her example, by imitating her daily habit of self-examination, the effect of which is so interestingly displayed in her diaries, exhibited in these volumes. It will be a happy and honourable confession, if in the secret hour of self-inquiry he can bring himself to say, "How vainly has my time been passed in the labour of perverting that literary justice of which I have taken upon myself to be the administrator. May my critical powers be much employed in future in the more useful office of *self*-examination,—so as more and more to convince me of the criminality of that course in which I have proceeded so long,—of converting an instrument of public instruction, into the vehicle of my own resentments and partialities. I have, alas! endeavoured to intercept the good flowing from a work in

which a pattern truly worthy of imitation has been presented to my country. I now humbly rejoice in the disappointment of my unworthy efforts; and welcome the dispensation which has made them recoil upon myself. It is some comfort to me to know that my lucubrations can never hurt posterity, having long gone the way of all their precursors."

Such an auspicious beginning of a new course in the life of this critic will be the pledge and earnest of its continuance and progression. It may spoil the Quarterly Reviewer, but it will improve the scholar and the gentleman. It will temper and qualify his criticisms. It will do more—it will by degrees acquaint him with the difference between a sectary and one who builds his humble faith, in all simplicity, upon the gospel; and (what he seems still less at present to comprehend) the difference between a sincere communicant of our National Church, and one who takes his creed from the "rational and immense majority of the religious public."

Until some such beneficial change shall have been wrought in the mind of this critic, I shall deem it no dishonour to be distinguished by his disapprobation; and shall willingly accept at his hands the victor's crown which he has in the commencement of his article awarded me, for outstripping all competitors in the race of deteriority; claiming at the same time, the benefit of the inference, that if so weak an adversary has defeated this valiant reviewer, it must be attributed to the strength of his case, and the simple force of truth.

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of Mrs. More, and the survivor thought proper to request the Editor to undertake the task of recording to the world the particulars of a life to which the world had been so greatly indebted.

It may be as well to add, that so great has been the mass of letters and papers, which in consequence of the above-mentioned designation of this important trust, has come to the hands of the Editor, that no pains were necessary, had it been his object, to extend this work to an unreasonable or inconvenient length. His difficulty has consisted in reducing his materials within the present compass. And it may not be improper to take this opportunity of stating, for the sake of obviating any suspicion of mercenary motives in the publication of so voluminous a collection, that all the proceeds of the sale of the copyright, beyond the costs and charges incident to the preparation of the work for the press, are destined to charitable purposes, and will be so applied.

Having endeavoured with as much assiduity as pressing occupations of a very different kind would allow, to do justice to the character and merit of the distinguished person he has brought before the public, and having anxiously studied to avoid offending the feelings or delicacy of any of those whose names occur in the course of the ensuing correspondence, if the Editor cannot say with Johnson that he dismisses the work 'with frigid indifference,' he can at least say with truth, that so long as neither the fame of Mrs. Hannah More, nor the cause with which it stands connected, has suffered detriment by passing through his hands, he dismisses the work without any unbecoming anxiety, (unbecoming at his time of life,) as to the result of his trial before the dispensers of critical justice.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE First Edition of this work, consisting of two thousand copies, having been exhausted within three weeks from the publication, a new impression is now offered to the public, having passed through the hands of the Editor, who has gladly availed himself of the opportunity it has afforded him of making the work more worthy of its subject by many corrections of errors of the press, as well as of his own inadvertencies.

Whether the publishers have over-estimated the attractions of these volumes by again sending forth the same numerous impression, remains to be seen; but the acceptance which it has already found has satisfactorily shewn that the country still holds its old principles in some honour, and that the name of Hannah More still attracts that attention which, in a manner, belongs to it by the 'Courtesy of England.'

The Editor takes this occasion to notice a letter received by him after this second edition had gone to press, from one of the grand-daughters of the late Dr. Langhorne, which offers some reasons for doubting the validity of the charge of intemperance which has been brought against his memory. Her vindication is principally grounded on the friendly terms in which he lived a little

before his death with some eminent characters, and his promotion to a prebend in the cathedral of Wells, only a year and a half before that event, by the Bishop of Bath and Wells. That a general impression so much to the disadvantage of so distinguished a character rests on such questionable grounds, is information which will be received with pleasure by those who feel a natural concern for the memory of departed genius.

Notwithstanding the observations introduced into the first volume of this work, to anticipate the impression which it was foreseen would be made upon the minds of many serious persons, by the light and unspiritual intercourse in which Mrs. Hannah More was engaged during the several years which immediately succeeded her first introduction to the societies of the metropolis, the Editor still finds himself called upon by animadversions which continue to be made by those whose concern for the consistency and completeness of the Christian character entitle them to respect, to repeat that it never was his intention by means of selections and suppressions, to carve out of Mrs. More's correspondence and intercourse, a perfect model of Christian excellence. His purpose has simply been to make an honest exhibition of character—to bring before the world this distinguished woman as she really was when she mixed with it, when she sympathized with it, and when she overcame it;—and to present to those who delight to dwell on every token of grace and providence, a case wherein by a mysterious agency a fellow mortal more than ordinarily endowed, has been carried through great temptaions and trials to an exemplary eminence in the attainments of practical religion. The work is designed for use rather than ornament; not as a panegyric upon flesh and infirmity, but as an illustration of the gracious dealings of HIM "whose

eye is upon them that fear him, and upon them that hope in his mercy."

If it be still remarked, and, no doubt, such is the opinion of some, that in the latter period of the life of Mrs. More, expressions, quotations, and allusions continued to escape from her pen, which bore the marks of her early associations, let it be recollected that religion, even in its more advanced state, will often in outward circumstances, and habitual characteristics, reflect something of the thoughts and sentiments which had an antecedent existence in the mind in its early days of susceptibility and inexperience. After much care and watering has been bestowed, and even the increase has come, the soil may yet retain a shade of its original colour, and the produce a relish of its primitive flavour.

Mrs. More who has shewn by her secret self-abasing confessions, preserved in these volumes, in what light she regarded her own merits, would have warned the world against the biographer whom she knew to entertain the design of publishing only a selected portion of her history: and those who know the true uses of biography, will thank the Editor, if they thank him for nothing else, for his open and integral display of the correspondence and intercourse of the interesting subject of his memoir. If he errs in his judgment, he trusts he does not mistake or mis-state his own principles, when he declares himself incapable of presenting Mrs. Hannah More to the world either better or worse than she has shewn herself to be by her letters, her life, and her labours.

The inspired biographers have set us an example which we shall do well to imitate. The sacred volume presents to man his own nature in its true condition of humiliation and corruption—unstable in his best estate, and only strong with his stay upon God. Truth is

greatly to be preferred to the gratification of a sentimental refinement; and the biographer is justly suspected, when he gives us a specimen which has no accordance with the testimonies of our inward experience.

It is for those who by the misapplication of talents have left the world more vicious than they found it, to have their lives blazoned by others who succeed to their places and opinions. Let us leave them 'alone with *their* glory.' It is another sort of glory with which the memory of Hannah More is surrounded—the glory of her own humble confessions, accompanying her Christian graces, and labours of love.

One thing is clear—that it would have been found impossible, if it had been attempted, to garble the letters of Mrs. More so as to have pleased or satisfied all tastes and opinions. The seeds of character which are sown in childhood are to some of little interest; others pay less regard to the fruits of antiquated experience; some look for ease, and some for effort; some for gravity, and some for gaiety; many object to the politics, and no small number to the religion of the writer; all will be apt to approve exclusively of so much of what they find in her letters as agrees with their own habits of thinking; meanwhile the Editor has thought it his duty steadily to follow the course of a correspondence so beautifully disclosing the stages of the Christian's advancement under divine teaching, from small beginnings, and through various trials, to victory and security.

From individual judgment, which takes every shape, the appeal properly lies to the great corporation of the reading public, whose collective sense will appear by their acceptance of the work; and it is hoped, if it makes its way through this mass of intelligence, its pro-

gress will in some degree be traced in its moral influence. If laws are becoming weak, and opinion strong,—if power is gradually passing from the few to the many, leaving its ancient settlements, to go with the throng in the great levelling march of its numerical and aggregate force, whatever has a tendency to rectify the common judgment, to lead the people to clearer perceptions of what belongs to their peace, and to counteract the effects of wicked counsel, deserves to be candidly, if not favourably received by the parent, the patriot, and the philanthropist;—and this is the best apology which the Editor can offer for the publication of the life and correspondence of HANNAH MORE.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

HAVING, in a preface to each of the preceding editions of this work, already obtruded myself too much upon the public, I had no intention to make a further experiment on its patience by any additional observations, either on the Memoir itself, or my own personal part in it. But some circumstances have occurred since the second edition made its appearance, to bring me reluctantly again to the task of explanation and defence. Perhaps, indeed, the simple fact of a third edition being so soon called for, after the publication of two such large impressions, ought to make me feel that as I have been using an instrument of some power in influencing practice and opinions, it becomes me to be at all times ready to protect its character and tendency from misrepresentation or mistake.

That attempts would be made to depreciate such a work was the more to be expected, as a whole life has been laid open to the scrutiny of the public, in its different periods and stages of struggle and advancement. With this consequence before me, I have, nevertheless, thought it my duty to produce the genuine correspondence of Mrs. More, without that scrupulous care in the selection which might have been expedient, had my purpose been to present a faultless model to the reader. I have chosen to make what seemed to be the fairest use of my materials, with a full knowledge not

only of the advantage which would be taken of this open practice by adversaries, but of the offence it might possibly give to some miscalculating friends. It was my object to produce not a work of art, but a record of truth,—such as might deserve the name of biography;—an honest history of a life, little diversified by outward circumstances, but affording an interesting development of internal character,—exhibiting the alternate ascendancy of truth and flattery,—'the rudiments of the world' resisting the call to a higher destiny, and a contest ending, after various success, in final victory.

Although I am far from thinking that every letter of a distinguished person becomes by his death the property of the public, or that the respect due to the departed is to give place to the rational curiosity, or even to the moral improvement of the living, yet I cannot but regard it as deceptious to cull those letters for publication, which exhibit a partial view of character, whether it be for praise or censure, or for a purpose which is equally false and more pernicious, the support of an editor's own particular opinions. If it may be done for the promotion of what is good and useful, the same right may be claimed by the advocates of what is dangerous and unsound; and thus by sorting a correspondence, almost any cause may be served out of the same stock of materials. Mrs. More has herself some lively remarks upon the posthumous abuse of such instruments in the hands of a disingenuous editor. "I am not satisfied," she observes, "with the life of Mrs. Carter, nor much pleased with her reviewer. The biographer, in order to do away the terrors of her piety and learning, has laboured to make her a woman of the world; and produced no less than five letters to prove that she subscribed to a ball;—he respects her fond-

ness for cards as much as if they were her passport to immortality. Every novel-reading Miss will now visit the circulating library with a warrant from Mrs. Carter."

This simplicity of plan and purpose has been carried through the whole work. Not only have the letters of Mrs. More been honestly laid before the reader, but her words have been neither softened nor suppressed. As there never was a more natural person, in the good sense of that term, it has been the biographer's care to exhibit the real woman; and to let her stand identified before her country as she ordinarily lived, corresponded, and conversed. I have not to save her from the charge of inconsistency, kept back her letters to Mr. Horace Walpole. There are those who have disapproved of their publication. But as they belong to her life and character as much as any other similar products of her pen, they are given to the public without reserve. But let it not be forgotten, that so awed was this libertine in sentiment by the dignity and purity of Mrs. More's character and demeanour, that none of those gross or profane allusions which form so large a proportion of his worthless correspondence with his other friends, found their way into any of his letters to that lady; and the only banter with which he ever ventures to assail her, was that of addressing her by the title of Saint, or Holy Hannah, the cheap raillery of vicious and vulgar men, but which shows the general impression made on the mind of this loose and light-minded person by the example of his correspondent, before whom his ribaldry was dumb, and his ridicule confounded. I will admit, however, that this part of her conduct involved a certain degree of inconsistency, but where does perfect consistency prevail except among the spirits of the just before the throne,—having a common centre, and but one will and one attraction.

Room would be wanting for other matters on which the attention of the reader will be requested, were all the various animadversions of which this work has been the subject, to be answered in detail; but there is one on which a few words may, perhaps, be properly bestowed. It has been complained that Mrs. More takes but little notice of her parents in any part of her correspondence; and it is true, that in the published letters they are not often introduced, but it is forgotten that all letters on private and domestic topics have been withheld from the public, which, while they would have sufficiently manifested her filial attachment, would have supplied little entertainment or matter of general interest. She did, in fact, maintain a very affectionate intercourse with her parents. Nor are the published letters altogether silent on these subjects. In the course of the first volume, her father and mother are mentioned in terms of warm affection,

With respect to the general arrangement of the letters. I cannot but confess that, in looking through them before committing them this third time to the press, several of them appear to have been misplaced. To dispose in strict chronological order so great a mass of correspondence, in which Mrs. More's own letters are, for the most part, without dates, and therefore to be duly arranged only by being made to synchronize with the events to which they allude, was a task requiring much pains and patience, where such internal evidence was afforded, and in the great majority of instances no such evidence was to be obtained. In the second edition, the arrangement was improved, but constant occupation of another kind did not afford me the leisure requisite to the completion of the task. It will be found, however, that the letters flow in a clearer sequence in this third edition. A few connecting statements, and some few letters which appeared to be important as supplying facts and incidents

to make the allusions more intelligible and plain, have been added, and some blanks have been filled with the names of the persons intended, where there appeared to be no reason for the suppression, or any objection to the disclosure on the part of friends or relatives.

The reader should be apprised, that the Latin translation of Mrs. More's poem on Bishop Bonner's Ghost, was not the performance of the late James Hay Beattie. I have been informed, but too late for the erroneous statement to be corrected, that in the first, or privately circulated edition of J. H. Beattie's Essays and Fragments, 8vo. 1794, there is a different translation of that poem, said to have been composed 1789, "Amici jussu," but the poem inserted was the only one on the Ghost of Bonner found among Mrs. More's papers.

And now for the Quarterly Reviewer.

The numerous friends and admirers of Hannah More, and those who are kindly disposed towards her biographer, have been urgent with me to repel the attack of this unsparing enemy. I was reluctant to do it, well knowing that this sort of mischief is very transient, and that as soon as the malignant performance has spent its ephemeral breath, the carcase of the criticism is left to moulder amidst the heap of antecedent accumulations. It seemed also, that to one who has declared the Editor of Mrs. More's life to be of all men the most accomplished for the task of spoiling that which had been committed to his care, the sale of 2000 copies in the first three weeks of the publication, and of another 2000 in the course of the next three months, and that, too, of a work of four thick volumes, was a virtual answer;—an answer still growing and gathering strength by the publication of a third edition of 2000 more. It seemed hardly to be believed even upon the affirmation of the Quarterly Review, that a life and correspondence committed to the

management of one with whom no editor can dispute the palm in the art of robbing what he touches of its interest and entertainment, should still be attended with such extraordinary success. Whether the reviewer has succeeded in raising me from my mediocrity amidst the crowd of ordinary men to this 'bad eminence,' I know not; but it seems to be generally allowed that no mercenary, if such be the relation in which he stands to the Review, secretly bent on betraying the interests which he has been hired to maintain, could have wrought more successfully, than the writer of the article in question. In this, as in other things, extremes approximate. I have been much congratulated on the honour cast upon Mrs. More, and in some degree upon her editor, by the malice of this critic; in return, therefore, let me compliment him on the alchymy of that touch which has thus involuntarily given to words of calumnious import the value and effect of decided commendation.

These considerations were so many motives to silence and forbearance, to which was added a suspicion that the article in question could not have been the work of any hand entitled to provoke an answer; and if any misjudging friend has happened at any time to suggest the name of some person of scholar-like repute, I have thought the suspicion uncharitable, and injurious towards an order of society the members of which are implicitly bound to live far above the suspicion of such an effort of mean hostility.

In addition to these motives to forbearance, the reader will, perhaps, indulgingly permit me to say that advanced age, which has cured me of literary ambition and vexation, has put me out of the reach of reviewing malevolence, while it has greatly increased my inability and indisposition to enter the lists with a vizored knight, with whose stratagems I am but partially acquainted; or

to engage in a dark contest with an invisible person, who by his corporate style of 'we' and 'us' declares his name to be Legion, and may bring with him to the field I know not what invisible co-operation, besides the support which he tells us he possesses, of all "the *rational* and immense majority of the religious public.[1]"

But notwithstanding all those motives to silence, I thought it not right, nor sufficiently respectful to public opinion, to bear submissively, the imputation of being a shallow pretender to learning, for this I take to be the import of the Reviewer's language; and I could not but consider myself as implicated in a common cause with Mrs. More's memory, and the interests of truth and virtue. In the humble office of biographer, the only merit that could be claimed was that of fidelity, impartiality, and correct delineation; and the honour aspired to was nothing greater than that of being the instrument of placing an excellent example in its right position before the world, with the shade of it resting upon myself.

But the critic has discovered that Mrs. More and her biographer are alike tainted with fanaticism; nor scruples to call the latter a narrow-minded sectary. The truth is, as must appear to every reader of ordinary acquaintance with the great subject of man's salvation, that the writer of this article is ignorant beyond the reach of shame, of what it most imports him to know. Any Sunday-school lad would inform him, that what he calls a sect, is only our common Christianity, to be seen

[1] The Reader will be better qualified to estimate the force of this test of orthodoxy, and the good sense of the proposition that would find the authority for an established religion in the opinion of the 'rational majority,' after perusing the charge of the Rev. Dr. Dealtry, the Rector of Clapham, delivered by him at the Hampshire visitation in the Autumn of last year. Better temper, more discretion, and wiser views, are, probably, not to be found in any writings upon this great subject.

on the surface of the Gospel, but which has no attractions for him or his flippant fraternity. The Editor belongs to the same sect as the lady whose life he has delivered over to the entertainment of the public and the malice of the reviewer,—the sect which was first christened at Antioch, with whose Founder the reviewer seems but indifferently acquainted.

The charges to which the Reviewer has subjected himself in his gross attack, as well upon the Editor as upon the subject of the memoir, are those of ignorance, mis-statement, and suppression. The article in an early stage of it, produces a long passage from a letter of a lady who pretends to no literature, but may justly claim the respect which is due to sound intelligence and correct feeling, as having come from the pen of the Editor, and then proceeds to make it the subject of criticism. The cavils directed against this unaffected and unaspiring performance, are to the last degree spiteful and puerile. But of the criticism I do not complain; I content myself with the statement of the simple fact, that the diction treated with such triumphant scorn was not mine, known not to be mine by the Reviewer, and yet by him assumed to be mine. There may be divers names for such a proceeding, but in the vocabularies of justice and honour, there is but one.

I have been guilty, it seems, of a flagrant anachronism in the date of one of Dr. Langhorne's letters, who is made in 1775, to talk of his wife as living, the same having died in 1768; and true it is, his wife did die in 1768, and that still he speaks of a living wife in 1775; and why not, if he married again? and so in truth did Dr. Langhorne, whose second wife died in 1776, and thus the problem is solved. But what does all this signify? the work of misrepresentation is done, and the Reviewer's purpose is answered; retributive justice follows

at a slow pace, and attention is diverted to some fresh object of the critic's malevolence, before the shame of the exposure can overtake him. The Reviewer probably went to the Cyclopœdia, or to Anderson's British Poets, to see what he could find about Dr. Langhorne, and there he found the second wife, and the intemperance of Dr. Langhorne, side by side in the narrative; but this was a part of the story he did not want, it being necessary for his purpose, that the sobriety of Dr. Langhorne should be vindicated, and his second marriage expunged. Having let in as much of the truth as he wanted, the falling portcullis cuts the narrative in twain, excluding what was inconvenient, and leaving him master of the mutilated remainder, to do with it all his pleasure.

So careless or unfortunate is this Reviewer, that there is scarcely a fact adverted to by him throughout his performance, which he has not contrived to mistake or mis-state. In page 433 of the number of the Quarterly Review, in which his article appears, he quotes as Hannah More's, a saying of Mr. Owen Cambridge. He says, (p. 423,) that Garrick, pleased with a written account she had given of his acting, "sought the acquaintance of the writer, who, nothing loath, was *presently* all but domesticated beneath his roof," whereas the memoir, and her own letters state, that her introduction to Mr. Garrick took place in the winter of 1773-4, and that her prolonged visits at his house commenced in 1776.

Again, he tells his readers that the letter to Mrs. Gwatkin (vol. i. p. 38.) is given as the first she wrote from London, whereas no such thing is said, but merely that such letter, bearing no date, appears to have been among "her earliest;" and yet upon this assertion does he rest one of his minute and paltry censures.

He complains that "we are *left in the dark* as to the

great practical question, how far the scheme of the schools realized, in the issue, Hannah More's fervent anticipations." A man must be left in the dark as to the contents of a book he will not read, or reads only to misrepresent. A perusal of the twelfth chapter of Part III, or the third chapter of Part IV, would have dissipated his darkness, and given him the discomfort of seeing more than he wished.

Now and then an anachronism, and here and there a careless repetition, is triumphantly proclaimed by this minute examiner; and the occurrence of certain verbal inaccuracies in the first edition, (for the Reviewer seems not to have seen the second, and to have regularly read only a small part of the first) gave his ill-nature a repast. His plan appears to have been to teaze where he could not terrify, and by a crowd of petty cavils and multiplied charges, to distress at least what he could not destroy.

He has been neither wise nor penetrating in his observations, but having only the first edition in his hands, he has seen faults which can have escaped nobody, and less than any body, the writer himself. The work is chargeable with many inadvertences, which it is hoped have been since removed or rectified. But the Reviewer's title to chastise the Editor for instances of inaccuracy is forfeited by his own delinquencies of a similar kind. He may be too great a man to spell Mrs. Montagu's name rightly, or to give Mrs. More's residence its proper designation, but he does not maintain his importance by treating with contempt the little incidents of the childish days of such a woman. Whatever he may think of the value of these petty records, the admirers of that lady would not have been satisfied with the omission of any of them, and it may be questioned whether this sapient critic will leave upon record any act of his maturity which will interest posterity more, or better deserve to be registered, unless

he can make up his mind to confess his injustice, and publish his recantation. Let it be remembered that this Memoir was not prepared for the entertainment of Quarterly Reviewers, nor these little incidents offered to the notice of such important personages, but intended for readers of ordinary humanity—for those who can condescend to be pleased with a correspondence once lighted up by so many luminaries, of which Hannah More was the shining centre.

Hostility to the memory of Hannah More was in the Quarterly Review an act of consistency. I do not complain of it. But I charge him with being an unmanly enemy. The article in question affords the clearest proofs in support of this allegation. Amidst professions of great respect, slanders which the critic seems ashamed to adopt, he is not ashamed to insinuate; and I shall not stoop to the vindication of one, who always disdained to use any other defence than the dignity of her deportment, the transparency of her principles, and the consistency of her life.

I will only advert to a specimen or two of the Reviewer's mode of resuscitating calumnies which had ceased to breathe, unless in the gross atmosphere of vicious and ignorant vulgarity. Speaking of the proposal of marriage, and the rupture of the treaty, the critic says, "In spite of those rumours to the contrary, which took so preposterous a shape in the table-talk of Lord Byron, we doubt not that Miss More's part in the transaction was blameless." Now had Lord Byron been asked what he really meant, would he not of course have answered: "What can I know of a person whom I never saw, with whose personal history I am wholly unacquainted, and who was an old woman before I was sent to school." And was it becoming in a writer in a journal professing to be moral and conservative, to allude in terms of

equivocal unbelief to rumours which, in fact, had no existence but in the loose fancy of a reckless jester upon all that he now knows to be supremely solemn. More useful and honourable, surely, had it been for the Quarterly Review, had it felt it to be its duty, as it really was, to discountenance, which it never did, the many mischievous products of that noble pen which issued from time to time, to the manifest injury of the public morals, from the same press, and the same mart, which sent out into the world the fruits of their own periodical labours.

The critic ends his remarks on the matrimonial treaty between Mr. Turner and Mrs. More, with observing that that passage in Mrs. More's life "requires elucidation," leaving it to be understood that in his view it has not been satisfactorily explained. But what further facts could with propriety or delicacy be called for. A contract of marriage was formed between Hannah More and Mr. Turner. In a wayward mood he first suspended, and then wished to renew the engagement. Disgusted with this unseemly conduct, the intercourse was discontinued, and finally determined by the act of the lady herself, and her friends. The sensibility with which the circumstances of this affair were felt by her, was shown in her determination to listen to no other proposals; her adherence to which determination was soon after put to the test. Every thing in relation to this delicate subject was settled by Sir James Stonehouse, whose name ought at once to satisfy an inquirer as to the perfect purity of a transaction in which he took a zealous and conspicuous part. I will not soil my page with even a notice, however slight, of some common-place jesting in which this Reviewer has thought it consistent with the character he has assumed, to indulge.

The Reviewer brings the charge of flattery against Mrs. More; and it is readily conceded that a system

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MEMOIRS.

PART I.

FROM A. D. 1745 TO A. D. 1779.

MEMOIRS.

CHAPTER I.

THE period for discharging a duty to the public, in presenting to them the life of HANNAH MORE, has arrived. Time, that has long detained her here in sickness and infirmity, has at length dismissed her to her spiritual home in an eternal world. But it is the privilege, if such it may be called, of the distinguished upon earth to live in a sort of secondary existence with posterity; and to secure to that existence its rights, and diffuse its benefits, is the responsible task of the biographer. That task, with respect to the remarkable female above-named, is assumed by one to whom a long friendship has afforded opportunities of observing and appreciating her qualities,—whose connection with those who have been her constant companions for many years, has brought him beyond others acquainted with her familiar history; and into whose hands all that was collected concerning her by her nearest friend and

earliest correspondent, her highly-qualified sister, during the most active years of her life, has been deposited for publication.

It is a matter of no light moment, to bring the memory of Hannah More fairly before the world. Her history and her character, in great part, belong to and represent an age, the form and pressure of which has of late been rapidly disappearing, to give place to a new order of things, and a very different system of manners; whether better or worse may be variously affirmed; in some points probably better, in others not so good; but certainly very differently constituted, and disclosing very different tendencies.

In the twilight of the old, and in the dawn of the new era, Mrs. More accomplished her date here,—succeeded, it may be, by ladies more talking and talked about, but probably by none so capable of making the voice of instruction echo from the cottage to the saloon,—from the house of clay to the hall of cedar. To embody the likeness, and perpetuate the remembrance of such a person, is to preserve the best specimen of the past to be contrasted with the present generation, and in some sort to repress the rising fancies, fopperies, and excesses, which usually accompany the developement of new opinions, propelling the mind in a career of self-adulation, to a dangerous distance from old paths, and the lights of experience. There was a happy balance in the qualities of this gifted lady, which kept her from all extremes. With a due estimate of the value of modern advancement, she retained the

savour of our island character, as it was once distinguished by its probity and plainness among the communities of Christendom. What woman was, and what woman is, in her best estate, in the past and present periods of her domestic history, were displayed in her deportment; and what woman should be under all estates, was illustrated in those principles which raised her character above the reach of shifting opinions, and made it a pattern for all times, and all countries.

It seemed but justice to this excellent person to say something respecting her peculiar title to the veneration of her country, before we entered upon the narrative of her instructive and interesting life; reserving the more particular delineation of her character for the opportunity which will more seasonably present itself at the close of our record. The same justice also demands that the reader should be forewarned not to expect a hypothetical model of perfect excellence. No picture, or exemplar, is affected to be drawn; nothing but the sincere life of a daughter of Eve, beginning her course amidst the vanities of the world, and advancing in excellence, under the impulse of extraordinary faculties, but more especially under the guidance of that grace, without which all labour is strife, and all prudence folly.

Her life and social intercourse will be developed in the correspondence about to be presented; in which it will be seen how violent was the assault made upon her principles by flatteries and distinctions; and how successfully the convictions which religion

brings to the conscience struggled with the world, and brought her safe out of the conflict into that humble path of moderation, circumspection, and trust, which made her example so profitable, and her teaching so efficacious.

A fitter example could not easily be proposed to her countrywomen than that of this virtuous lady, at a time when a new distribution and assortment of duties and occupations are threatening to disturb the balance of society, by confounding distinctions established by nature and necessity. It is, besides, of no small importance to divert the public mind from that infectious biography, which has engrossed of late so much of its attention, blazoning under colours the most false and alluring, the ministers and minstrels of sin and pollution. A woman is here presented to the recollection of her country, who once sat under her own palm-tree, and sent forth her oracular truths, to which neither the murmurs of poverty, nor the sound of the harp or viol, amidst want or waste, in hamlets or in courts, could deny audience or admittance.

HANNAH MORE, the youngest but one of the five daughters of Jacob More, who was descended from a respectable family at Harleston, in Norfolk, was born in the year 1745, in the parish of Stapleton, in the county of Gloucester. Mr. Jacob More had received a learned education under the brother of the celebrated Dr. Samuel Clarke, at the Grammar School of Norwich, where he appears to have made a great proficiency in classical learning. He

had been designed for the church; but his early expectations being defeated by the failure of a law-suit in the family, he quitted that part of the country, and obtained, through the patronage of Lord Bottetourt, a foundation-school near Stapleton—a situation which, at that time, fulfilled the utmost of his wishes. Soon after he came into this part of the world, he married a young woman of plain education, the daughter of a creditable farmer, but endowed, like himself, with a vigorous intellect: and to the soundness of her judgment in the culture and regulation of her children, the credit and success which attended them has, in great part, been deservedly attributed.

This branch of the family was attached to the established church, Mr. More himself being a staunch Tory, and what is understood by the designation of a high churchman; but the other members of the family were Presbyterians, and the daughters of Mr. Jacob More had frequently heard their father say that he had two great uncles captains in Oliver Cromwell's army. Mr. Jacob More's mother appears, from family tradition, to have possessed a mind of more than ordinary vigour. She was a pious woman, and used to tell her younger relatives, that they would have known how to value gospel privileges had they lived, like her, in the days of proscription and persecution, when, at midnight, pious worshippers went with stealthy steps through the snow, to hear the words of inspiration delivered by a holy man at her father's house, while her father, with a drawn sword, guarded the entrance

" where Mary found it, sitting at Jesus' feet, and hearing " his words. Nor will such be inclined to reject my father's " declaration of what he himself heard from my grand- " father's own lips, on account of some trivial mistakes " of memory. As for the opinions of men so prejudiced " and party-coloured as the writer in the Quarterly Re- " view, there is in them so little, even of an appearance " of impartiality, that I cannot conceive them to have " much weight, even among those for whom they are " intended."

Such are the principal circumstances belonging to the intercourse of the late Mr. Latrobe with Dr. Johnson, to the consideration of which I have been drawn, not certainly by my general subject, but by the unmannerly and unwarrantable observations of the Reviewer upon the publication of what he calls the "anonymous sheet" found among Mrs. More's papers.

It is rather curious by the way to remark, that this gentleman quarrels with all who dare talk of " the conversion" of Dr. Johnson, whereas, in truth, that expression is used, not by any of the persons against whom his anger is directed, but *by Dr. Johnson himself.* At page 335, of the fifth volume of Mr. Croker's work, is found a prayer composed by Johnson eight days before his death, in which the Doctor emphatically thus prays, " Forgive, and accept my *late conversion.*"

The passage in which the Reviewer raves most ridiculously on the subject of Dr. Johnson, and quarrels most seriously with Mrs. More's biographer on his account, is the following:—

" The attempt to persuade us that Dr. Johnson's mind was not made up as to the great fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion, until it was enforced on him, in extremis, by sectarian or methodistical zeal, cannot redound to the credit of Mr. Roberts's understanding. If

he had condescended to read the Doctor's own 'Prayers and Meditations,' he would have found him to have been, as far back as his religious feelings can be traced, fully convinced of the *propitiatory sacrifice*. In the prayer on his birthday, transcribed himself thirty years afterwards, he expressly states his hope of salvation to be 'through the satisfaction of Jesus Christ.' And as in this faith he lived, so undoubtedly he died."

Now, in the first place, all that the Reviewer has affirmed with respect to my own part in this affair, is the creation of his fancy administering to his malice. He accuses me of making an 'attempt to persuade people that Dr. Johnson's mind was not made up as to the great fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion until it was enforced on him by sectarian or methodistical zeal.' I have attempted to *persuade* nobody of anything, but have produced the letter in question, as an interesting document, and deserving of attention, leaving it perhaps too bare, rather than otherwise of comment.

With respect to the great man, who seems to lose something of his greatness in passing through the hands of this officious friend, it seems not to be understood, that while it is fully admitted that Dr. Johnson had, throughout his life, a decided belief in what the Reviewer calls 'the atonement,' and 'the propitiatory sacrifice,' it may be, and is the opinion of some of the best informed upon this subject, that until shortly before his departure, this doctrine, though professedly embraced by the great moralist in the abstract, and as a formal truth, occupied a low, false, and unscriptural place in his religious system;—that it is one thing to entertain a belief of the fact of the atonement, and another to make that right application, and self-appropriation of it, which constitutes real, saving, and sanctifying Christianity.

Now of both these states of mind there is the most

satisfactory ground for believing that Dr. Johnson had experience—that he halted some time between the two—and that finally, to the comfort and repose of his soul, he settled in that which ascribed the whole work of his gratuitous redemption to the miracle of the cross.

Nothing could bear stronger testimony to the change alluded to, than the different aspects under which death presented itself to his thoughts at the different stages of his Christian progress. In the February of his last year, 1784, he had told Sir John Hawkins, 'with a look that 'cut him to the heart, that he had the prospect of death before him, and that he dreaded to meet his Saviour.' But in the December of the same year, he speaks to the same friend of 'the loathing he had felt of sin, and of himself,' and adds, 'at these times I have had such rays of hope shot into my soul, as have almost persuaded me that I am in a state of reconciliation with God.' (Croker's Boswell, vol. v. p. 333.)

Henceforward, the Saviour, who had before appeared to him as a kind of teacher of a system of salvation by works mixed with repentance, becomes *salvation itself* to him. His petitions are now no longer for 'ability to fulfil the *conditions* of salvation,' but he thus prays, 'Grant, O Lord, that my *whole hope and confidence* may be in his merits, and in thy mercy; forgive and accept my late conversion; enforce and accept my imperfect repentance.' (Vol. v. p. 335.)

His will commences with the solemn declaration, 'I bequeath to God a soul polluted by many sins, but I hope purified by Jesus Christ.' Boswell adds, 'Dr. Brocklesby, who will not be suspected of fanaticism, obliged me with the following account:—

'For some time before his death, all his fears were calmed and absorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his trust in the merits and propitiation of Jesus Christ.'

The same writer supplies us with the statement of those who attended him during the last twelve hours of his life:

'At the interval of each hour they assisted him to sit up in his bed, and to move his legs, which were in much pain, when he regularly addressed himself to fervent prayer. He said his mind was prepared, and the time of his dissolution seemed long. No man could appear more collected, more devout, and less terrified at the thoughts of the approaching minute.'

And this was the man who, but a few months before, could not bear the most distant allusion to death, and was filled with dread at the thought of "hearing that sentence of which there is no revocation."

Most assuredly he did *not* 'die as he lived,' for he lived in a vain and fruitless endeavour to work out a justification for himself by his own obedience, but he died 'loathing himself' for his 'sins and pollutions,' and trusting simply to the cross. He lived amidst terrors and alarms at the thoughts of death; he died collected, devout, unterrified, thinking the 'time to his dissolution to be long.' This was not dying as he lived, except in the confused apprehension which the Reviewer seems to entertain of all these distinct marks and indications of the progress of religion in the soul.

Those who have leisure and curiosity to sift this controversy further, will find in the Christian Observer for the years 1827, 1828, 1831, and 1832, the particulars of Dr. Johnson's acceptance of the humbling truths of the gospel, awakening him to the fullest perception and acknowledgment of his own sinfulness, and sending him to the cross of the Saviour, with nothing to plead but that Saviour's merits; and for a full, spiritual, and masterly discussion concerning the indications of an important change in the mind of Dr. Johnson towards the close of

his life, I refer with great pleasure to the "Christian Essays," by the Rev. S. C. Wilks.

From the facts and observations occurring in the important and able journal above alluded to, it may with great satisfaction be collected, that there was a portion of Dr. Johnson's life and interior character, of which many of his admiring friends were ignorant: they did not see it, or they did not comprehend it; or, if they did comprehend it, they did not seem to consider it as useful for their purpose, being in bad keeping with that picturesque exhibition of character, which they knew to be most attractive and entertaining in description.

I was just about to take leave, and the thought was really refreshing, of this vain and supercilious adversary, when it struck me as almost necessary to the ends of justice, to lay before my readers an instance or two of the tone and spirit of his verbal criticisms, and of the Quarterly manner, for I cannot find a term that better denotes it, of his cutting up his victim. After some observations illustrative of his opinion of the true test of orthodoxy, namely, the determination of "the rational and immense majority of the religious public," he thus proceeds, "a more serious and prevailing mischief is, that Mr. Roberts takes part with nothing but the peculiar views and sect to which Mrs. H. More, in the latter years of her life, lent the distinction of her too exclusive favour." Let the reader look to her correspondence and associates towards the close of her existence, and he will judge of the propriety of this observation of the critic.

Hannah More is represented as remarking in allusion to her father's mode of instruction, that "the conversation of an enlightened parent or preceptor constituted one of the best parts of education." Upon which the Reviewer makes the following observation. "Imagine who can, that Hannah More had arrived at the recondite

dogma about education, which she appears to have taken such pains in enforcing upon the mind of her biographer, in consequence of her grateful recollection of those cabalistic intonations;" alluding to Mr. More's amusing his little daughter's ear with the sound of the Greek language. But what he can mean by the pains taken by Mrs. More to '*enforce her dogma about education on the mind of her biographer*,' I am quite at a loss to conjecture. He does not seem in this instance to have any clear design, but only a random sort of malevolence, too impatient to inflict injury to be capable of a steady aim.

Mrs. More had a certain tenderness respecting the use of terms which have been in a manner consecrated by religious associations, to express common notions and things. On her bed of sickness she mentions several of these forms of speech, to which her objections applied, as the 'Christening of a Ship,' the 'Salvation of the Country,' 'Resurrection Men,' 'Trinity Lane,' the 'Ascension of a Balloon,' &c. Now she may, perhaps, have been too nice in this objection, but does it deserve to be stigmatized as "a sad weakness?" Such as it was, it was based upon many instances, some stronger than others; but down comes again the portcullis of the Quarterly Reviewer, and cuts off all but the "Ascension of a Balloon," thus making his readers believe that the whole weight of Mrs. More's indignation rested upon this phrase, by which her peace of mind was disturbed. There is really a wickedness in all this, which it would be a waste of words to expose, and I cannot help thinking, that his reviewing habits have in this instance betrayed him into an affectation of acuteness with some cost and sacrifice to both his heart and head. It implies some pains-taking with himself to bring down the practice of a well-educated man to a style of criticism so low, so petulant, and so puerile.

from violent or profane intrusion! adding, that they boarded the minister, and kept his horse, for ten pounds per annum. By an anecdote related of this lady, it should seem that she possessed considerable fortitude. Being subject to sudden seizures, for which bleeding was necessary, to avoid the necessity of sending three miles across the country for medical assistance, she learnt to perform the operation upon herself. The mother's only sister, after whom Mrs. Hannah More was named, was a woman of considerable capacity, greatly improved; and her memory was so esteemed, that an embroidered silk apron of her workmanship, is still preserved as a relic by a distant branch of the family. The following communication, received by the executrix some little time after Mrs. More's death, from one of her relations, furnishes a few interesting particulars of the family:—

Diss, Oct. 14, 1833.

DEAR MADAM,

I am anxious to give you all the information I can respecting my mother's family. I can assure you it is correct, and will correspond with any family letters or documents that may be found; as my revered parent had an excellent memory, and a strong affection for her grandmother, which made us value the only memorial we had, namely, the apron which she worked at a boarding-school in Norwich.

The family of the Mores was highly respectable, but they were of different parties. Mrs. H. More's

grandfather married into a family who were zealous nonconformists. They boarded a minister in their house, and assembled there at the hour of midnight, to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, while Mr. More guarded the entrance with his sword. In after times, my mother has heard the old lady reproach her granddaughter as lightly esteeming the word of God, when they complained of fatigue after walking some distance in the midst of winter to their place of worship. She was a staunch Presbyterian, remarkable for the simplicity and integrity of her principles. She always rose at four, even in the winter, after she had reached her eightieth year; and she lived beyond her ninetieth. Her son, Mrs. H. More's father, and her daughter, afterwards Mrs. Hayle of Needham, each received an education adapted to their prospects, which were considered as promising all that is desirable in this life; but the unfortunate issue of a law-suit blasted their well-founded hopes, and sent Mr. More from his native country to the west of England. We, who are spared to see the result of this trying dispensation of Providence, must pause to meditate awhile on his infinite wisdom and mercy, more particularly when we look at the descendant of the more fortunate cousin, who enjoyed his unjustly-gotten wealth but a short time. Death entered his dwelling, and his eldest son soon dissipated all the property, as he lived in the lowest state of profligacy. The estates were worth more than eight thousand per annum at the close of the law-suit. There was also a substantial family-mansion, with a

library, family portraits, &c. It is situated near the coast of Wenhaston, in Suffolk, not far distant from Aldborough. I went a journey thither, to examine if there were any monuments that would supply me with data. I found only one; it was erected to the memory of the fortunate Mr. More; not being acquainted with the Christian names, I am at a loss how to distinguish them. There were two Mr. Mores—Mrs. H. More's great uncles, who served in Cromwell's army. I have seen the name in Lord Clarendon's History of the Rebellion. There were also a Mrs. and Miss More, who died at Yoxford: the latter of a cancer, at the age of fifty. They, with the rest of the family, were on terms of intimacy with Sir John Blois, Lord Rous, the grandfather of the Earl of Stradbroke, the Goldings of Thorington, Reginald Rabbet, Esq. of Bramfield, Dr. Carter of Beccles, and all the families of consideration in the vicinity. Believe me to be,

Your faithful
humble servant,
ELIZABETH NEWSON.

These little circumstances are of no other value than as they serve to expose the error of the general opinion respecting the quality and condition of this family, whose origin, if not noble, appears at least to have been liberal and respectable.

From information that cannot be questioned, we learn, that at a very early age she was distinguished by great quickness of apprehension, retentiveness of memory, and a thirst after knowledge; and as it

may be interesting to the curiosity of the reader to trace the dawnings of so bright a genius, I shall not apologize for inserting a few little anecdotes of her early childhood. Between the age of three and four, her mother, thinking it time to teach her to read, found to her astonishment, that by an eager attention to the instructions bestowed upon her sisters, she had already made considerable progress; and before she had attained her fourth year, she repeated her catechism in the church, in a manner which excited the admiration of the minister of the parish, who had so recently received her at the font. Her nurse, a pious old woman, had lived in the family of Dryden, whose son she had attended in his last illness, and the inquisitive mind of the little Hannah was continually prompting her to ask for stories about the poet Dryden. At this early period, too, the signs of that precarious health which exercised her piety and virtue by so many trials in the course of her long life, began to appear; and it was recorded in the family, that pain and suffering were in her at that early period without their usual attendants of fretfulness and impatience.

At eight years old, her thirst for learning became very conspicuous: but her father, in addition to his other disappointments, having at his removal from his native place lost the principal part of his books, which he had sent by a separate conveyance, his collection became circumscribed to the very small number which travelled with him, and which consisted of a few Latin, Greek, mathematical,

and geographical authors: but this deficiency was in some measure supplied by his very wonderful memory, which enabled him to satisfy the eager desire of his daughter to learn the histories of the Greeks and Romans, by relating to her, while sitting on his knee, all the striking events which they contained, and reciting to her the speeches of his favourite heroes, first, in their original language, to gratify her ear with the sound, and afterwards translating them into English; particularly dwelling on the parallels and wise sayings of Plutarch; and these recollections made her often afterwards remark, that the conversation of an enlightened parent, or preceptor, constituted one of the best parts of education.

It is related, that Mr. More, who was remarked for his strong dislike of female pedantry, having nevertheless begun to instruct his daughter in the rudiments of the Latin language, and mathematics, was soon frightened at his own success.

The study of the mathematics was not pursued: but she ever carefully cultivated her acquaintance with the Latin classics; and of the mathematics she has often said, that the little taste of them she had thus acquired, was of sensible advantage to her through the whole course of her intellectual progress. The mother, who had received but a moderate education, but is said to have been furnished by nature with some of her best gifts, was as anxious for the instruction of their promising daughter, as the father was fearful of its consequences: and his consent to her entering upon any

new studies was only wrung from him by their joint importunity.

The eldest of the five daughters was sent to a French school at Bristol; as it was the wish of the parents that their children should be qualified to procure for themselves a respectable independence by the establishment of a boarding school; and this meritorious purpose was seconded by the industry and solid abilities of this daughter, who upon her return from school at the end of each week, constantly imparted to her sisters the lessons she had received, and under this tuition Hannah begun an acquaintance with the French language, which was afterwards matured by study and opportunity into a perfect acquaintance with its idiom and pronunciation. Some French officers, of cultivated minds and polished manners, who being on their parole in the neighbourhood, were frequent guests at Mr. More's table, always fixed upon Hannah as their interpreter; and her intercourse with this society is said to have laid the ground of that free and elegant use of the language for which she was afterwards distinguished.

In her days of infancy, when she could possess herself of a scrap of paper, her delight was to scribble upon it some essay or poem, with some well-directed moral, which was afterwards secreted in a dark corner where the servant kept her brushes and dusters. Her little sister, with whom she slept, was usually the repository of her nightly effusions; who in her zeal lest these compositions should be lost, would sometimes steal down to pro-

cure a light, and commit them to the first scrap of paper which she could find. Among the characteristic sports of Hannah's childhood, which their mother was fond of recording, we are told, that she was wont to make a carriage of a chair, and then to call her sisters to ride with her to London to see bishops and booksellers; an intercourse which we shall hereafter show to have been realized. The greatest wish her imagination could frame, when her scraps of paper were exhausted, was that she might one day be rich enough to have a whole quire to herself. And when, by her mother's indulgence, the prize was obtained, it was soon filled with supposititious letters to depraved characters to reclaim them from their errors, and letters in return expressive of contrition and resolutions of amendment.

At length, the sisters were thought sufficiently qualified for their long-projected undertaking of opening a boarding-school at Bristol; which, from its first commencement, was attended with uncommon success; and the eldest Miss More, not yet quite twenty-one, took under her care, Hannah, scarcely then twelve years old, to give her the benefit of masters in the modern languages. And here it may not be amiss to mention, that the high character for pure morals, discreet conduct, and solid information, which the eldest sister had already acquired, made her the early object of that respect which followed her to the tranquil and Christian close of her useful life. She was indebted for this best inheritance to her worthy parents, who had

ever anxiously endeavoured to infuse into their children's minds the same exalted sense of morality, built upon religious principles, which adorned their own; and the sisters never ceased to remember the pious care which their father had taken to impress upon their minds the sanctity of the Lord's day.

Among the books that were now brought within her reach, the Spectator was the first to engross her attention; which, if not of solidity enough to furnish to the young mind the sound elements of just thinking and pure taste, was at least calculated to inspire a relish for improving studies, and the reciprocal duties of social intercourse.

She had reached her sixteenth year, when the elder Sheridan came to Bristol, to give lectures on eloquence: and such was the impression made upon her young imagination, by an exhibition so novel and intellectual, that her feelings could find utterance only in a copy of verses, which was presented to the lecturer by a friend of both the parties. The performance was probably beyond the promise of an age so tender, as it induced Mr. Sheridan to seek an acquaintance with the author, which, when obtained, increased his admiration of her dawning genius. About the same period, a dangerous illness brought her under the care of Dr. Woodward, a physician of eminence at that day, and distinguished by his correct taste. On one of his visits, being led into conversation with his patient, on subjects of literature, he forgot the purpose of his visit in the fascination of her talk; till suddenly recollecting himself, when he was half-way down stairs, he

cried out, 'Bless me! I forgot to ask the girl how she was;' and returned to the room, exclaiming, 'How are you to-day, my poor child?'

About this time she formed an acquaintance with Ferguson, the popular astronomer, then engaged at Bristol in giving public lectures: an acquaintance which soon ripened into friendship: and the time they passed together being devoted to topics connected with science, she derived from it a decided advantage; and he, on his part, was impressed with so much respect for her taste and genius, that he is said to have submitted the style of most of his compositions to her inspection. With such testimonies she was early ushered into literary life; and her increasing acquaintance with books and men, kept her on an equality with the expectation which such testimonies had begun to excite. But, among her early acquaintance, to none does she appear to have been more indebted for her advancement in critical knowledge, and the principles of correct taste, than to a linen-draper of Bristol, of the name of Peach, of whose extraordinary sagacity and cultivated intellect, she was often heard to express herself with great admiration. He had been the friend of Hume, who had shown his confidence in his judgment, by entrusting to him the correction of his history, in which, he used to say, he had discovered more than two hundred Scotticisms. But for this man, it appears, two years of the life of the historian might have passed into oblivion, which were spent in a merchant's counting-house in Bristol, whence

he was dismissed on account of the promptitude of his pen in the correction of the letters entrusted to him to copy. More than twenty years after the death of Mr. Peach, the subject of these Memoirs, being in company with Dr. Percy, then Bishop of Dromore, Mr. Gibbon, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and others, who were conjecturing what might have been the cause of this chasm of two years in the life of Hume (of which the Bishop was then proposing to give a sketch) she was enabled to clear up the mystery, by relating the above anecdote. As the intended life did not appear, she never knew what use the bishop made of her communication.

At this time there existed few or none of those judicious selections from our best authors which are now in the hands of all young persons under education; and it was observed by the youthful moralist, that for want of such an advantage a custom was prevailing among her juvenile acquaintance, of committing to memory parts of plays, not always sound in principle or pure in tendency. In the hope of giving to these habits a safer direction, she wrote, in her seventeenth year (1762), the pastoral drama of the 'Search after Happiness.' And the attempt succeeded as it deserved.

She appears at this period of her life, as at all others, to have suffered much from a morbid sensibility of constitution, which exposed her to severe suspensions of her mental activity. During one of those intervals of necessary repose, she formed an acquaintance at Weston-super-Mare, to which place

she had resorted for the recovery of her health, with Dr. Langhorne; with whom a very lively intellectual intercourse was sustained, until a habit of intemperance, in which he had vainly sought relief, under the pressure of domestic calamity, raised a barrier between him and persons of strict behaviour. Some of the letters of this spendthrift of the patrimony of genius to Miss More are entertaining, and exhibit a good specimen of his vigorous and vivacious pen. Alas! that nature should have so often to deplore the neglect or abuse of her best gifts. But it is Satan's proudest exploit to make the powers of man turn against himself; and that which should be for his peace, to become an occasion of falling. Whether the propensity to which we have alluded, intercepted the career of this highly qualified man, I know not; but he died in the flower of his prime, when the promises of his youth were on the verge of their full accomplishment. That such a man should take pains to put out the lamp that lights up the chambers of speculation and thought within him, is as lamentable as it is censurable; and little more can be said for him, but that his guilt and folly appear harmless, in comparison with the malignity of those of our day, who abuse the arts of composition and the power of song, to spread a moral night around them, and to set on the passions to do their savage work, while the soul slumbers in a dreaming security, under the dire influence of their delusive opiates.

Blagdon House, Oct. 22, 1773.

DEAR MADAM,

My evil genius told me you were no more. I sat one fine day at Lincombe-spring, and thought of you with great sensibility. Poor Hannah More, said I, bade me plant weeping-willows along the side of the rivulet. She shall be obeyed; and they shall shed natural tears over departed genius,—over buried friendship.

> Genius, and wit, and beauty wait,
> The mansions of the silent urn;
> One tender tear shall sooth her fate,
> One tender line for Hannah mourn.

Our best thanks for your Indian sweet-meats. But alas! we have nothing to return except the *frutti campestri.*

Believe me, dear Madam, I look forward to the Christmas vacation with abundance of pleasure. Then, I tell my hopes, we shall once more live melodious days.

Bustle is delighted with his nutcrackers, and says, he now loves Hannah More a great deal, and Miss Neale only a little. A genuine Roger of the Vale!

Mrs. L. desires me to say every thing that is friendly and affectionate for her. Pray tell the sisterhood that I am their most faithful humble servant; and then tell yourself *tutti che senti Amicizia di core,* for I am most truly,

Most sincerely yours,

J. LANGHORNE.

Blagdon House, 12th, Feb. 1775.

MY DEAR MADAM,

People who have a knack at writing have many advantages over those poor folks who know little about the matter; and this I had the sagacity to discover before I had got quite to the end of your letter. When I found that you had slipped away to London, without any more regard to your promise than a prime minister, I opened your letter in no good temper, you may suppose. But I had not read far before I began to soften, by and by to be appeased, then satisfied, and afterwards in perfect good humour; and all this for no reason in the world, that I could discover, but because some folks have a knack in writing, and like Milton's very polite and sensible devil, can make 'the worse appear the better reason.'

The *lacheté* of being thus overcome, however, is perfectly ridiculous; and, now that I have recovered my senses a little, I can see your fault in spite of your address; or, to speak like my old acquaintance, Dr. I—, 'I can perceive the turpitude of your guilt through the magnetism of your eloquence.'

In plain English, you were very lazy and very naughty, in not stepping over to Blagdon, as you promised. You know my carriage was at your summons. But you do not care a farthing for us, and you are disappointed if you thereby think to make us unhappy; for there is no reason why we should despise ourselves, though you despise us.

I never had a doubt concerning the spuriousness

of the Poems of Ossian. It was impossible the originals should exist. What chiefly gives them an antique air is their penury of ideas; a circumstance that does more honour to the inventor's judgment than to his imagination. After all, I have a regard for Macpherson, who has certainly some talents, and is a well-behaved man.

Should you be in town when the poor 'Justice'[1] is delivered from the burden of the press, you will perhaps let me know how the air agrees with him. Whatever that town may say, of this be assured that he deserves no favour at its hands.

You are a classic—*Vive, memor mei!*

J. LANGHORNE.

P. S.—You are so obliging as to ask me for commands; supposing that if a poet and a philosopher have business in town, it must, doubtless, be in your own literary way. Pray be so good as go to the warehouse in George's Yard, Oxford Street, over against Dean Street, Soho, and buy me a bushel of Surinam potatoes, for planting; which, with the paper of instructions you will receive along with them, please to send by the Bristol waggon, to the Queen's Head, Redcliffe Street.

Commands from my lady wife,[2] who is neither poet nor philosopher, for you or for your good sister, viz. a crimson hat and cloak trimmed with blond lace. You are moreover desired to order the necessary

[1] A poem he was about to publish.

[2] The *Quarterly Reviewer* remarks, that Mrs. L. died in 1768. But so punctilious a critic ought to have known, that Dr. L. contracted a second marriage.

materials, without leaving a plenipotentiary commission with the milliner. Neither is to be violently modish. So saith my lady wife to you and sister, and that she is your very affectionate humble servant.

Blagdon House, June 24th, 1775.

That your *fame* had reached the ends of the earth every body knew; but that *you* were gone thither, was such news to me that I shall not forget it—till I see you here again. What you tell me, over and above, is still more extraordinary—that you eat and drink beneath the sky! and that the sun, at this time of the year is somewhat of the warmest. Why, I'd lay my whole Greek estate to one of Mr. Newberry's little books, that fifty millions of people, not one of whom was called Hannah More, have done and discovered the same. There's for you now; and for your attempting, with your allegories and your metaphors, and such jack-o'-lantern things, to puzzle a poor country-parson, and a fellow that hath no wit.

By the bye, though I envy Bristol the quiet possession of you most mortally, I do not like to hear of you in this same Cornwall, crawling about the ancles and heels of the island, insomuch that if you do but shake a leg, down you go into the sea without recovery.

Yet did I think, for at least two hours, of leaving my *Arx secura*, and visiting your bower; nay, I was full three quarters more resolved, and were I now to ask myself what prevented me, I should get

no answer. I designed to have passed through Exeter, Tavistock, Lostwithiel, Truro, and Penryn —was I right? However, I beg my most respectful compliments to the family where you are, and let them know that, if I come into those parts, I shall ask permission to read the inscription on the bower. It is elegantly plain, such as all things of that kind ought to be. I would, by my good-will, have my muse like my mistress.

> Her voice the music of her heart,
> Unforced, and innocent of art;
> Her face a flower of vernal morn,
> That opens, and a smile is born.

I would willingly have it so, I say; but we all run after out-of-the-way things. How enchantingly beautiful was Gray's Muse, when she wandered through the church-yard in her morning dress. But when she was arrayed in gorgeous attire, in a monstrous hoop and a brocade petticoat, I could gaze upon her indeed; she made an impression on my eye, but not on my heart. Can you tell me who wrote a little poem called *The Halcyon?* I met with it lately in a foolish collection, and was mightily pleased with its elegant simplicity and easy flow. I have read something that Mason has done in finishing a half-written ode of Gray. I find he will never get the better of that glare of colouring, 'that dazzling blaze of song,' (an expression of his own, and ridiculous enough) which disfigures half his writings.—Adieu!

J. LANGHORNE.

Blagdon House, Feb. 11, 1776.

MY DEAR MADAM,

There is as much difference between reputation and fame as there is between time and eternity; and I, as a spiritual person, should attend to the interests of the latter; I am, therefore, much less concerned about your reputation than your fame. You shall not appear in the St. James's, nor in any other saint's chronicle, nor any where else except in the saint's calendar—whoever does these things, the author is suspected, and *the wife of Cæsar*—you know the rest. I hear you have had the honour to be abused by Kenrick; I think nothing would hurt me so much as such a fellow's praise—I should feel as if I had a blister upon me.

You will stand first in the Review for February I am told; the Storm was in the way in January, and the article arrived too late; *there*, too, I find, you will be trimmed. It is no matter—you deserve all this for running away from your *tried* friends in the country. If you will come down to us, we will remove the emporium of letters from London to Bristol; we'll set up a press, and write books; I have got a *thing* and a *half* ready for it. *Les voici:*

APOSTROPHE TO MERCY.

(FROM THE COUNTRY JUSTICE, PART III.)

O Mercy! throned on His eternal breast,
Who breathed the savage waters into rest!
By each soft pleasure that thy bosom smote,
When first Creation started from his thought;

By each warm tear that melted o'er thine eye,
When on his works was written, 'These must die!'
If secret slaughter yet, nor cruel war
Have from these mortal regions forc'd thee far,
Still, to our follies, to our frailties blind,
Oh! stretch thy healing wings o'er human kind!

Blagdon House, Dec. 19, 1776.

I do not intend in this letter to write about any body or any thing but myself; it is probable, therefore, that the apologies you very likely expect you will find in my history. I am at present of no small importance in my own estimation, being just risen from the dead, a citizen of no mean city! The truth is, that for two months past I have been incapable of enjoying, and almost of attending to any one earthly thing; totally depressed, sunk down and buried, beneath a complication of rheumatic, scorbutic, nervous, and bilious complaints. These rebellious powers, like the Americans on their continent, carried every thing before them in a very *unconstitutional* manner. At last matters came to a crisis. General Bile was appointed commander-in-chief, and led the whole forces of Rheumatism Bay, Scurvy Island, and Nervous Province, into the very centre and heart of my dominions, and arrayed his army in form of battle. I drew up my whole force against him in the following order:—

First battalion, a body of Emetic Tartars, under the command of General Ipecacuanha. These fought with uncommon bravery for one whole day and a night, made prodigious havoc of the Biliary forces,

and took their general prisoner. A truce was proclaimed for twenty-four hours; when it appearing that a large body of the Biliaries had secreted themselves in the lower parts of the country, I despatched the

Second battalion, consisting of foreign troops, chiefly of the provinces of Senna, Tamarind, and Crim Tartary, under the command of sub-brigadier-general Cathartic.

These brave soldiers behaved with great courage and gallantry; defeated the Biliaries in fifteen pitched battles, and at last totally drove them out of the country. The above two battles lasted five days and five nights. The engagement was at first so hot that victory was doubtful. It was indeed, a dreadful and a bloody combat, and I certainly can never forget it.

On the sixth day, a few of the nervous regiments were seen straggling, but being pursued by Colonel Cordial with the Jalap light-horse, they threw down their arms. The troops of Scurvy Island concealed themselves in the woods, and other inaccessible places.

Thus, my dear Madam, have I given you a circumstantial account of a most desperate and dangerous contest I maintained for my all. What were the battles of Bunker's Hill and Long Island compared to this? In my estimation certainly nothing.

I am now *wondrous* well, and whether you may or may not flatter me that I shall continue so, I will, at all events, lay before you an idea of the constant regimen of my life.

At eight I rise, and that is almost as soon as the sun at this season makes himself known to us here. On my table I find a cup of cold chamomile tea with an infusion of orange peel;—dress, and come down stairs at nine, when I meet my breakfast, consisting of a basin of lean broth with a dry brown loaf, manufactured from corn of my own growing. Breakfast table cleared, I call for pen, ink, and paper, and recollect—not which of my correspondents I have been longest indebted to, but which the humour leads most to write to. After this is performed, I apply a little to the laws of my country, to make myself a more useful citizen, and a better magistrate.

About twelve, if the day turns out fine, I order my horses, for exercise on Mendip, which at this time of the year I can seldom effect; I am consequently obliged to seek exercise in measuring the length of my own hall. At two I dine, always upon one dish, and, by way of desert, eat three or four golden pippins, the produce of my own orchard, and drink as many glasses of wine. But then the afternoon—the solitary afternoon—Oh! for that the trash of the month comes in, and whether it makes me laugh or sleep, 'tis equally useful. The evening is divided between better books, music, and mending the fire, a roasted potatoe, a pint basin of punch, and to bed.

You have here the whole etiquette of my retirement, which in the summer is diversified by rural occupations and more agreeable amusements. In winter I am a better scholar, but in summer I

am a better citizen. In the former season I attend only (as I do in this letter) to myself; in the latter I cultivate the ground, raise crops of corn, and hay, and flocks of sheep, and am useful to society.

I assure you, that in my next letter I intend to think and speak of *you*. Thank you for your pretty Cottonian verses, and your easy and elegant epitaph, which, I think, is without a fault.

Your most truly affectionate,

LANGHORNE.

Dr. Langhorne's correspondence may be fitly closed with a little copy of verses sent by him to Hannah More.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN THE AUTHOR'S GARDEN ON THE PROMISE OF A VISIT FROM A LADY.

I.

Blow, blow, my sweetest rose!
For Hannah More will soon be here,
And all that crowns the ripening year
Should triumph where she goes.

II.

My sun-flower fair, abroad
For her thy golden breast unfold,
And with thy noble smile behold
The daughter of thy god.

III.

Ye laurels, brighter bloom!
For she your wreaths, to glory due,
Has bound upon the hero's brow[1]
And planted round his tomb.

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[1] The Inflexible Captive.

IV.

Ye bays, your odours shed!
For you her youthful temples bound,
What time she trod on fairy ground,
By sweet Euterpe led!

V.

Come, innocent and gay,
Ye rural nymphs your love confess,
For her who sought your happiness,[1]
And crowned it with her lay.

At the age of twenty, having access to the best libraries in her neighbourhood, she cultivated with assiduity the Italian, Latin, and Spanish languages, exercising her genius and polishing her style in translations and imitations, especially of the odes of Horace, and of some of the dramatic compositions of Metastasio, which were shown only to her more intimate literary friends, of whom some have left their testimonies to their spirit and elegance. She was not, however, in sufficient good humour with these, or indeed, with any of her very early compositions to allow them to live. The only one which was rescued, was Metastasio's opera of Regulus, which after it had lain by for some years, she was induced to work up into a drama, and publish under the title of 'The Inflexible Captive.'

It is related of her, in proof of the ease with which she transfused the spirit of the Italian authors into her own language, that being present at a celebrated Italian concert, to gratify one of the company, who was desirous of knowing the subject

[1] Search after Happiness.

of some parts of the performance, she took out her pencil, and gave a translation of them, which was snatched from her, and inserted in the principal Magazine of the day.

She ranked among her literary friends at this time, Dean Tucker, Dr. Ford, and Dr. Stonehouse, persons, to mix with whom, upon equal terms, was proof sufficient, (for she was then only between twenty and thirty,) of her early maturity of understanding.

Dr. (afterwards Sir James) Stonehouse, was then a name of high reputation. He had been many years a physician in great practice at Northampton, which profession he was induced to relinquish for one to which the bent of his mind had strongly disposed and prepared him. Having recovered his health by the use of the Bristol waters, he took holy orders, and fixed his residence in Bristol, in the same street in which Hannah More then lived with her sister. A friendship soon commenced between them, which suffered no interruption till the death of Sir James. Miss H. More had written but little when this acquaintance commenced, but Dr, Stonehouse discerned the promise of greater things, and was unbounded in his admiration of the freshness and originality of her powers in conversation, in which her modesty and judgment contended with her fancy and fertility. Miss H. More wrote the epitaphs of both Sir James Stonehouse and his lady, in the chapel at the Hot-wells.

It would be injurious to the merits of Dr. Stone-

house, to forget to say of him that he was an useful guide to his young friend in her study of divinity, and her choice of theological writers.

At about the age of twenty-two, she received the addresses of a gentleman of fortune, more than twenty years older than herself. He was a man of strict honour and integrity, had received a liberal education, and, among other recommendations of an intellectual character, had cultivated a taste for poetry, and shown much skill in the embellishments of rural scenery, and the general improvement of his estate. But for the estate of matrimony he appears to have wanted that essential qualification, a cheerful and composed temper. The prospect of marriage, with the appendage of an indifferent temper, was gloomy enough, but there were other objections, on which it is unimportant to dwell. It will be enough to produce an extract from a letter received by the executrix of Hannah More soon after her decease, written by a lady whose early and long intimacy with her, and personal knowledge of this delicate transaction, coupled with the great respectability of her character, entitle her testimony to the fullest credit.[1]

Keynsham, near Bristol, Feb. 10, 1834.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I knew the late Mrs. Hannah More for nearly sixty-four years, I may say most intimately; for

[1] The widow of the late Captain Simmons.

during my ten years' residence with her sisters, I was received and treated, not as a scholar, but as a child of their own, in a confidential and affectionate manner; and ever since the first commencement of our acquaintance the same friendly intercourse was kept up by letters and visiting. I was living at her sister's when Mr. Turner paid his addresses to her; for it was owing to my cousin Turner (whom my father had placed at their school) that she became acquainted with Mr. Turner. He always had his cousins, the two Miss Turners, to spend their holidays with him, as a most respectable worthy lady managed and kept his house. His residence at Belmont was beautifully situated, and he had carriages and horses, and everything to make a visit to Belmont agreeable. He permitted his cousins to ask any young persons at the school to spend their vacations with them. Their governesses being nearly of their own age, they made choice of the two youngest of the sisters,—Hannah and Patty More. The consequence was natural. She was very clever and fascinating, and he was generous and sensible; he became attached, and made his offer, which was accepted. He was a man of large fortune, and she was young and dependent. She quitted her interest in the concern of the school, and was at great expense in preparing and fitting herself out to be the wife of a man of that condition. The day was fixed more than once for the marriage; and Mr. Turner each time postponed it. Her sisters and friends interfered, and would not permit her to be so treated,

and trifled with. He continued in the wish to marry her: but her friends, after his former conduct, and on other accounts, persevered in keeping up her determination not to renew the engagement.

I am, dear Madam, &c.

In this difficulty (we borrow still from the same authentic source), Sir James Stonehouse was applied to for his timely interposition, and his assistance was promptly afforded. In the counsel of such a friend she found resolution to terminate this anxious and painful treaty. The final separation was amicably agreed upon, and the contracting parties broke off their intercourse by mutual consent. At their last conversation together, Mr. T. proposed to settle an annuity upon her, a proposal which was with dignity and firmness rejected, and the intercourse appeared to be absolutely at an end. Let it be recorded, however, in justice to the memory of this gentleman, that his mind was ill at ease till an interview was obtained with Dr. Stonehouse, to whom he declared his intention to secure to Miss More, with whom he had considered his union as certain, an annual sum which might enable her to devote herself to her literary pursuits, and compensate, in some degree, for the robbery he had committed upon her time. Dr. Stonehouse consulted with the friends of the parties, and the consultation terminated in a common opinion that, all things considered, a part of the sum proposed might be accepted without the sacrifice of delicacy or propriety, and the settlement was made without the

knowledge of the lady, Dr. Stonehouse consenting to become the agent and trustee. It was not, however, till some time after the affair had been thus concluded, that the consent of Miss More could be obtained by the importunity of her friends.

The regard and respect of Mr. Turner for Miss More, was continued through his life; her virtues and excellences were his favourite theme among his intimate friends, and at his death he bequeathed her a thousand pounds.

I have entered into this transaction at a time when the grave has heaped its mound upon it, and no bosom any longer beats that can be affected by the narrative. No apprehension therefore of giving pain has imposed silence upon me; and as I know not whose malevolence may induce them to misinterpret the actions of this excellent person, (and Hannah More has not so sojourned here as not to have provoked "the strife of tongues") it has been of importance to rescue this great and generous name from the imputation of inconstancy, or a calculating prudence, in an affair in which truth and honour claim to be the rightful arbiters.

Her correct and tender mind, which did not come out from these embarrassments without a certain degree of distress and disturbance, seemed to seek relief in the resolution which she formed and kept, of avoiding a similar entanglement. Nor did her resolution want its trial and its testimony. Not long afterwards her hand was again solicited and refused; and, as it happened in the former case, the attachment of the proposer was succeeded by

a cordial respect, which was met on her part by a corresponding sentiment, and which ended only with his existence. These incidents the reader of delicacy will duly appreciate. There is upon the face of them a stamp of that high-mindedness and moral strength, by which the dignity of her character was illustrated in the various walk of her Christian life—public and private.

Those who knew her best, felt the difficulty most of deciding to which belonged the greater homage—the firm or the amiable qualities of her mind. At the early age at which we are now retracing her course, we see in her correspondence and intercourse, a spirit and a principle, which, if we do not admire and love, it is because the fascinations of imposing and unfeminine examples have, in these days of deceptious lights and dangerous novelties, imparted a wrong bias to the judgment, and inverted the natural dispositions of order and propriety.

CHAPTER II.

We have now attended Miss More to the threshold of active life and general society,—to the portal of that tumultuous mart where the busy clamour of interest, emulation, and vanity assail the ear and bewilder the senses—to that stage in the progress of ardent inexperience where the blooming speculations of hope and fancy are to be exchanged for vulgar verities.

Hannah More now presents herself to us as a member of those assemblies where wit and fashion were to put her principles upon the defensive, and prove and decide her character. Her raptures on her first introduction to a 'live author,' she has been heard very humourously to describe; and her sisters long remembered the strong desire she expressed to have a view, from some hiding place, of Dr. Johnson, or some of the literary oracles of the day. Garrick's career was supposed to be drawing to a close, which inflamed her eager desire to hear Shakespeare speaking by the organ of that consummate actor—a wish that might be pardoned in

one to whom the Muse had already made a tender of her patronage, and vouchsafed her inspiration; and for whose brows she was preparing an unfading chaplet.

What her opinions were at a subsequent period, of the lawfulness of frequenting theatrical exhibitions, became apparent in her conduct and correspondence; but at the time we are regarding her, neither the manners and habits of persons denominated religious, nor the scruples of her own mind, had interdicted her visits to the theatre.

But there are some rare minds, in which sobriety and enthusiasm settle well together, and combine their forces; and of this temperament was Hannah More's. Impelled by the consciousness of superior powers, she probably felt a natural desire to enter upon the field of intellectual enterprise. Society, in its most engaging form, was extending its arms to receive her, and it was not in woman to resist the invitation; but her correspondence and confidential communications soon made it apparent how just an estimate she put upon its fascinations. She possessed that 'hidden strength,' which in 'the various bustle of resort' kept her from vanity and vacillation. Her admiration of genius belonged to the structure and constitution of her mind, on which the fairest forms of truth and sentiment were beautifully inscribed. If to know the great and to hear the wise, was the ambition of her early days, let it be remembered that, in the maturity of her age, to gain the good was her single concern; and that having to decide between pleasure and

virtue, she made her choice with a promptitude so resolute, that, if I must not find in Hercules a likeness for a lady, I may well compare her with the heroine of Comus. She came forth to meet the world with a talisman in her bosom; 'something holy lodging there,' that broke and defeated its spells and its forgeries.

Some of her earliest letters, after her introduction into general society, were written to Mrs. Gwatkin, (but it is to be regretted they are without date), then living near Bristol, one of her first and firmest friends; and it will probably amuse the reader to be brought acquainted with their contents.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Gwatkin.

Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Here have I been a whole week, to my shame be it spoken, without ever having given you the least intimation of my existence, or change of situation; but I doubt not of your having been informed of it by my friend Charlotte. You, who know the hurry, bustle, dissipation, and nonsensical flutter of a town life will, I am sure, excuse me if I have not devoted a few minutes to you before, when I assure you it has not been in my power. Martha and the fair Clarissa are of the party, and we are comfortably situated in Henrietta Street.

We have been to see the new comedy of young Sheridan, 'The Rivals.' It was very unfavourably received the first night, and he had the pru-

dence to prevent a total defeat, by withdrawing it, and making great and various improvements; the event has been successful, for it is now *better*, though not *very* much, liked. For my own part, I think he ought to be treated with great indulgence: much is to be forgiven in an author of three and twenty, whose genius is likely to be his principal inheritance. I love him for the sake of his amiable and ingenious mother. On the whole I was tolerably entertained. Saturday we were at the 'Maid of the Oaks,' at Drury. The scenery is beautiful—the masquerade scene as good as at the Pantheon. The piece is only intended as a vehicle to the scenery, yet there is some wit and spirit in it, being written by General Burgoyne, and embellished, &c. by Garrick. He is not well enough to play or see company—how mortifying! He has been at Hampton for a week. If he does not get well enough to act soon, I shall break my heart. Monday we dined, drank tea, and supped, at the amiable Sir Joshua Reynolds's; there was a brilliant circle of both sexes; not in general literary, though partly so. We were not suffered to come away till one.

I have not been able to pay my devoirs to my dear Dr. Johnson yet, though Miss Reynolds has offered to accompany me whenever I am at leisure. I wish I could convey his 'Journey to the Hebrides' to you; Cadell tells me he sold 4000 of them the first week. It is an agreeable work, though the subject is sterility itself: he knows how to avail himself of the commonest circumstances, and trifles are no longer trifles when they have passed through his

materials, without leaving a plenipotentiary commission with the milliner. Neither is to be violently modish. So saith my lady wife to you and sister, and that she is your very affectionate humble servant.

Blagdon House, June 24th, 1775.

That your *fame* had reached the ends of the earth every body knew; but that *you* were gone thither, was such news to me that I shall not forget it—till I see you here again. What you tell me, over and above, is still more extraordinary—that you eat and drink beneath the sky! and that the sun, at this time of the year is somewhat of the warmest. Why, I'd lay my whole Greek estate to one of Mr. Newberry's little books, that fifty millions of people, not one of whom was called Hannah More, have done and discovered the same. There's for you now; and for your attempting, with your allegories and your metaphors, and such jack-o'-lantern things, to puzzle a poor country-parson, and a fellow that hath no wit.

By the bye, though I envy Bristol the quiet possession of you most mortally, I do not like to hear of you in this same Cornwall, crawling about the ancles and heels of the island, insomuch that if you do but shake a leg, down you go into the sea without recovery.

Yet did I think, for at least two hours, of leaving my *Arx secura*, and visiting your bower; nay, I was full three quarters more resolved, and were I now to ask myself what prevented me, I should get

no answer. I designed to have passed through Exeter, Tavistock, Lostwithiel, Truro, and Penryn —was I right? However, I beg my most respectful compliments to the family where you are, and let them know that, if I come into those parts, I shall ask permission to read the inscription on the bower. It is elegantly plain, such as all things of that kind ought to be. I would, by my good-will, have my muse like my mistress.

> Her voice the music of her heart,
> Unforced, and innocent of art;
> Her face a flower of vernal morn,
> That opens, and a smile is born.

I would willingly have it so, I say; but we all run after out-of-the-way things. How enchantingly beautiful was Gray's Muse, when she wandered through the church-yard in her morning dress. But when she was arrayed in gorgeous attire, in a monstrous hoop and a brocade petticoat, I could gaze upon her indeed; she made an impression on my eye, but not on my heart. Can you tell me who wrote a little poem called *The Halcyon?* I met with it lately in a foolish collection, and was mightily pleased with its elegant simplicity and easy flow. I have read something that Mason has done in finishing a half-written ode of Gray. I find he will never get the better of that glare of colouring, 'that dazzling blaze of song,' (an expression of his own, and ridiculous enough) which disfigures half his writings.—Adieu!

J. LANGHORNE.

Blagdon House, Feb. 11, 1776.

MY DEAR MADAM,

There is as much difference between reputation and fame as there is between time and eternity; and I, as a spiritual person, should attend to the interests of the latter; I am, therefore, much less concerned about your reputation than your fame. You shall not appear in the St. James's, nor in any other saint's chronicle, nor any where else except in the saint's calendar—whoever does these things, the author is suspected, and *the wife of Cæsar*—you know the rest. I hear you have had the honour to be abused by Kenrick; I think nothing would hurt me so much as such a fellow's praise—I should feel as if I had a blister upon me.

You will stand first in the Review for February I am told; the Storm was in the way in January, and the article arrived too late; *there*, too, I find, you will be trimmed. It is no matter—you deserve all this for running away from your *tried* friends in the country. If you will come down to us, we will remove the emporium of letters from London to Bristol; we'll set up a press, and write books; I have got a *thing* and a *half* ready for it. *Les voici:*

APOSTROPHE TO MERCY.

(FROM THE COUNTRY JUSTICE, PART III.)

O Mercy! throned on His eternal breast,
Who breathed the savage waters into rest!
By each soft pleasure that thy bosom smote,
When first Creation started from his thought;

By each warm tear that melted o'er thine eye,
When on his works was written, 'These must die!'
If secret slaughter yet, nor cruel war
Have from these mortal regions forc'd thee far,
Still, to our follies, to our frailties blind,
Oh! stretch thy healing wings o'er human kind!

Blagdon House, Dec. 19, 1776.

I do not intend in this letter to write about any body or any thing but myself; it is probable, therefore, that the apologies you very likely expect you will find in my history. I am at present of no small importance in my own estimation, being just risen from the dead, a citizen of no mean city! The truth is, that for two months past I have been incapable of enjoying, and almost of attending to any one earthly thing; totally depressed, sunk down and buried, beneath a complication of rheumatic, scorbutic, nervous, and bilious complaints. These rebellious powers, like the Americans on their continent, carried every thing before them in a very *unconstitutional* manner. At last matters came to a crisis. General Bile was appointed commander-in-chief, and led the whole forces of Rheumatism Bay, Scurvy Island, and Nervous Province, into the very centre and heart of my dominions, and arrayed his army in form of battle. I drew up my whole force against him in the following order:—

First battalion, a body of Emetic Tartars, under the command of General Ipecacuanha. These fought with uncommon bravery for one whole day and a night, made prodigious havoc of the Biliary forces,

and took their general prisoner. A truce was proclaimed for twenty-four hours; when it appearing that a large body of the Biliaries had secreted themselves in the lower parts of the country, I despatched the

Second battalion, consisting of foreign troops, chiefly of the provinces of Senna, Tamarind, and Crim Tartary, under the command of sub-brigadier-general Cathartic.

These brave soldiers behaved with great courage and gallantry; defeated the Biliaries in fifteen pitched battles, and at last totally drove them out of the country. The above two battles lasted five days and five nights. The engagement was at first so hot that victory was doubtful. It was indeed, a dreadful and a bloody combat, and I certainly can never forget it.

On the sixth day, a few of the nervous regiments were seen straggling, but being pursued by Colonel Cordial with the Jalap light-horse, they threw down their arms. The troops of Scurvy Island concealed themselves in the woods, and other inaccessible places.

Thus, my dear Madam, have I given you a circumstantial account of a most desperate and dangerous contest I maintained for my all. What were the battles of Bunker's Hill and Long Island compared to this? In my estimation certainly nothing.

I am now *wondrous* well, and whether you may or may not flatter me that I shall continue so, I will, at all events, lay before you an idea of the constant regimen of my life.

At eight I rise, and that is almost as soon as the sun at this season makes himself known to us here. On my table I find a cup of cold chamomile tea with an infusion of orange peel;—dress, and come down stairs at nine, when I meet my breakfast, consisting of a basin of lean broth with a dry brown loaf, manufactured from corn of my own growing. Breakfast table cleared, I call for pen, ink, and paper, and recollect—not which of my correspondents I have been longest indebted to, but which the humour leads most to write to. After this is performed, I apply a little to the laws of my country, to make myself a more useful citizen, and a better magistrate.

About twelve, if the day turns out fine, I order my horses, for exercise on Mendip, which at this time of the year I can seldom effect; I am consequently obliged to seek exercise in measuring the length of my own hall. At two I dine, always upon one dish, and, by way of desert, eat three or four golden pippins, the produce of my own orchard, and drink as many glasses of wine. But then the afternoon—the solitary afternoon—Oh! for that the trash of the month comes in, and whether it makes me laugh or sleep, 'tis equally useful. The evening is divided between better books, music, and mending the fire, a roasted potatoe, a pint basin of punch, and to bed.

You have here the whole etiquette of my retirement, which in the summer is diversified by rural occupations and more agreeable amusements. In winter I am a better scholar, but in summer I

hands. He makes the most entertaining and useful reflections on every occurrence, and when occurrences fail, he has a never-failing fund in his own accomplished and prolific mind. Pray let me hear from you soon. I wish you were with us.

I am so hurried, that I do not know what I write. Adieu, my dear friend,

Your's at all times,
HANNAH MORE.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Gwatkin.

That *Idler*, that *Rambler*, Dr. Johnson, was out of town, so we were deprived of the felicity of seeing him last night; but it is a pleasure the obliging Miss Reynolds has promised me. Though this bright sun did not cheer us with his rays, yet we had a constellation of the Agreeables. I enclose the verses I mentioned. The thought happened to strike in preference to the others. We cannot have the pleasure of seeing Charles Street to-night—— Have been to hear Lindsey——Hope you did not expire at the opera for fear, as Lady Grace says, you should not live to go to another.

Adieu—much your's,
H. MORE.

From the same to the same.

Hampton Court.

MY DEAR MADAM,

At length I have the pleasure of being well enough to be suffered to gratify my inclination to pay a visit to this most charming and delightful place. I have been here these three days, but till this morning could not venture to visit the palace; which, to a weak person, is a very great undertaking, and I cannot but felicitate myself upon having accomplished it without the least fatigue. I think, Madam, I have heard you say, you have never seen this palace; but I hope, if you come to town in the spring (as you sometimes promise), your curiosity will excite you to it. It is the second sight (the Museum was the first) that ever with me more than satisfied a raised expectation. This immense edifice is rather like a town than a palace, and I would not pretend to venture out of the apartment we are in without a clue of thread in my hand to bring me back by. The private apartments are almost all full; they are all occupied by people of fashion, mostly of quality; and it is astonishing to me that people of large fortune will solicit for them. Mr. Lowndes has apartments next to these, notwithstanding he has an estate of £4000 a-year. In the opposite ones lives Lady Augusta Fitzroy. You know she is the mother of the Duke of Grafton.

I must now say a word about the place I am in. My extreme ignorance does not permit me to judge

of this magnificent building according to the rules of architecture or taste. Yet that cannot destroy the pleasure I receive in viewing it. I need not tell you, my dear Madam, that it was built by the ambitious Wolsey, not for a regal palace, but for his own use; and is a striking monument of his presumption, luxury, and riches. The grand state-apartments are all that they show; and these are six-and-twenty in number, and, for magnificence of every kind, are indeed admirable. I except the furniture, which the iron tooth of time has almost totally destroyed. This brings to my mind the fable of Æsop, where the old woman, smelling to the lees of the brandy-cask, cries out, Ah! dear soul! if you are so good now that it is almost over with you, what must you have been when you were in perfection? It is a false report that this place was stripped of the fine paintings to adorn Buckingham House, as there were none removed but seven of the Cartoons; six of these glorious pieces having been burnt, What shall I say of these paintings? I was never more at a loss. A *connoisseur* would be confounded at their number and beauty; what then can I do, who scarcely know blue from green, or red from yellow. I will only say that they are astonishingly beautiful; they are the originals of the greatest master of the Italian school, and consequently of the whole world. The stair-case is superb, light, and modern, richly ornamented with the *finest* paintings, I should have continued to think, if I had not seen *finer* afterwards. The Muses and Apollo, gods, devils, and harpies (I forget by what

hand), ten thousand pieces, I believe, in different rooms, by Vandyke, Lely, Rubens, Guido, Baptiste Rousseau, Kneller, and every other name that does honour to this divine science. In the grand council chamber nothing can surpass the ceiling—yet something can too; King William's writing closet is prettier. It is Endymion and the Moon; so sweet the attitudes—so soft the colouring—such inimitable graces!

I do not know a more respectable sight than a room containing fourteen admirals, all by Sir Godfrey. Below stairs is what they call the beauty-room; this is entirely filled with the beauties of King William's time, his queen at the head, who makes a very considerable figure among them, and must have been very handsome: but no encomiums can do justice to the labours of this industrious princess; her tapestry and other works being some of the finest ornaments here. The other tapestry is immensely rich; the ground gold; but what surpass every thing of this kind are two rooms hung, the one with historical pieces of the battles and victories of Alexander, the other with those of Julius Cæsar. The celebrated Cynic and his no less celebrated tub, is worthy of the highest admiration. The contempt and scorn that animate his countenance, in addressing himself to the victorious Macedonian, delighted me extremely. You have the character of Clytus in the lines of his face. These famous pieces of tapestry were done at Brussels, from the paintings of Le Brun, at Versailles. Another room, and what is esteemed one of the finest, is hung round

with the defeat of the Spanish Armada, with an inimitable piece of Lord Effingham Howard, then Lord High Admiral. It would be endless to aim at recounting the numberless curiosities with which the palace abounds: but I must not omit mentioning an ordinary room, full of the original furniture of the cardinal. It is curious chiefly for its antiquity, consisting only of cane tables, chairs, &c. I have not yet seen the play-house, chapel, and gardens. Every day this week is destined to pleasure, of which I shall plague you with an account in the next sheet. This day, had we been in town, we should have had tickets for the birth-night: but you will believe I did not much regard that loss, when I tell you I have visited the mansion of the tuneful Alexander; I have rambled through the immortal shades of Twickenham; I have trodden the haunts of the swan of Thames. You know, my dear madam, what an enthusiastic ardour I have ever had to see this almost sacred spot, and how many times I have created to myself an imaginary Thames: but enthusiasm apart, there is very little merit either in the grotto, house, or gardens, but that they once belonged to one of the greatest poets on earth. The house must have been originally very small, but Sir William Stanhope, who has bought it, has added two considerable wings; so that it is now a very good residence. The furniture is only genteel; all light linen; not a picture to be seen; and I was sorry to see a library contemptibly small, with only French and English authors, in the house where Pope had lived. The grotto is very large, very little ornamented,

with but little spar or glittering stones. You know, Madam, the garden is washed by the Thames, without any inclosure. It is beautiful. This noble current was frozen quite over. The reason, I suppose, why we saw no Naides. Every Hamadryad was also congealed in its parent tree. I could not be honest for the life of me: from the grotto I stole two bits of stone, from the garden a sprig of laurel, and from one of the bed-chambers a pen; because the house had been Pope's, and because Sir William, whose pen it was, was brother to Lord Chesterfield. As our obliging friend will not let us pass over anything that is worth seeing, we went to Lord Radnor's, now Mrs. Henley's. This is within a hundred yards of Mr. Pope's; consequently the situation, the water, and the gardens are much the same. It is fitted up in a whimsical taste: there is a pretty picture-gallery; the pieces mostly Dutch; the apartments are small, and rather oddly than magnificently furnished. I believe there is no such a thing as a large room in this part of the world, except in this palace: a room the size of one of your parlours would be accounted a wonder. You will easily believe, Madam, that I could not leave Twickenham without paying a visit to the hallowed tomb of my beloved bard. For this purpose I went to the church, and easily found out the monument of one who would not be buried in Westminster Abbey. The inscription, I am afraid, is a little ostentatious: yet I admire it, as I do the epitaph, which I will not transcribe, as I am sure it is as fresh in your me-

mory as in mine. I imagine the same motive induced him to be interred here which made Cæsar say, 'he had rather be the first man in a village than the second at Rome.' Pope, I suppose, had rather be the first ghost at Twickenham than an inferior one at Westminster Abbey. I need not describe the monument to you, as you have seen it as well as his father's.

This day I have been to see

'Esher's groves and Claremont's terraced heights.'

as the sweet poet of the Seasons calls them. I need not tell you, Madam, that this famous Claremont is the seat of the Duke of Newcastle: but alas! this is an unpropitious season for parks, gardens, and wildernesses. You have undoubtedly seen Claremont; so I shall not describe it. It commands thirty miles prospect, St. Paul's among the rest. The park is vast, and I like it better than Bushy Park, of which Lord Halifax is ranger. It is almost close to Hampton Park, not quite twenty miles from London. On our return we went to see Mr. Garrick's: his house is repairing and is not worth seeing: but the situation of his garden pleases me infinitely. It is on the banks of the Thames; the temple about thirty or forty yards from it. Here is the famous chair, curiously wrought out of a cherry-tree which really grew in the garden of Shakspeare, at Stratford. I sat in it, but caught no ray of inspiration. But what drew, and deserved my attention, was a most noble statue of this most

original man, in an attitude strikingly pensive—his limbs strongly muscular, his countenance expressive of some vast conception, and his whole form seeming the bigger from some immense idea with which you suppose his great imagination pregnant. This statue cost five hundred pounds.

Adieu, my dear Madam,
with grateful respects,
H. More.

Hannah More visited London in 1773 or 4, in company with two of her sisters; and her introduction to Mr. and Mrs. Garrick took place in about a week after her arrival. Garrick had seen a letter from Miss More to a person known to them both, so well describing the effect produced upon her mind by his performance of the character of Lear, as to inflame his curiosity to see and converse with her. The interview was easily procured; and after an hour passed together, they parted reciprocally pleased, having discovered in each other what was gratifying to both—natural manners, original powers, and wit in union with good nature. On the day following, Miss More and Mrs. Montague were brought together at Mr. Garrick's house; and her introduction to the great and the greatly-endowed was sudden and general. It came upon her with a surprise which might excuse some whisperings of self-adulation, and some disturbance of principle.

It was afterwards Mr. Garrick's delight to introduce his new friend to the best and most gifted of his own acquaintance.

The desire she had long felt to see Dr. Johnson, was speedily gratified. Her first introduction to him took place at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who prepared her, as he handed her up stairs, for the possibility of his being in one of his moods of sadness and silence.

She was surprised at his coming to meet her, as she entered the room, with good humour in his countenance, and a macaw of Sir Joshua's in his hand; and still more, at his accosting her with a verse from a Morning Hymn which she had written at the desire of Sir James Stonehouse. In the same pleasant humour he continued the whole of the evening. Some extracts from the letters of one of her sprightly sisters, to the family at home, will afford the best picture of the intercourse and scenes in which Hannah was now beginning to bear a part.

London, 1774.

Since I wrote last, Hannah has been introduced by Miss Reynolds to Baretti and to Edmund Burke, (the sublime and beautiful Edmund Burke !) From a large party of literary persons, assembled at Sir Joshua's, she received the most encouraging compliments; and the spirit with which she returned them was acknowledged by all present, as Miss Reynolds informed poor us. Miss R. repeats her little poem by heart, with which also the great Johnson is much pleased. [1]

[1] If there be any persons remaining, who were in habits of social inter-

London, 1774.

We have paid another visit to Miss Reynolds. She had sent to engage Dr. Percy (Percy's collection,—now you know him,) who is quite a sprightly modern, instead of a rusty antique, as I expected. He was no sooner gone, than the most amiable and obliging of women (Miss Reynolds,) ordered the coach to take us to Dr. Johnson's *very own house*; yes, Abyssinia's Johnson! Dictionary Johnson! Rambler's, Idler's, and Irene's Johnson! Can you picture to yourselves the palpitation of our hearts as we approached his mansion. The conversation turned upon a new work of his, just going to the press, (the Tour to the Hebrides,) and his old friend Richardson. Mrs. Williams, the blind poet, who lives with him, was introduced to us. She is engaging in her manners; her conversation lively and entertaining. Miss Reynolds told the doctor of all our rapturous exclamations on the road. He shook his scientific head at Hannah, and said, 'She was a *silly thing*.' When our visit was ended, he called for his hat, (as it rained) to attend us down a very long entry to our coach, and not Rasselas could have acquitted himself more *en cavalier*. We are

course with the family of Mrs. H. More, they will readily bear testimony to the originality of humour and playfulness of imagination which enlivened the conversation and letters of this lady, Miss Sally More, who possessed also talents of another kind; some of the most valuable of the cheap repository tracts being the productions of her pen. She was senior to Mrs. H. M. by a very few years. The reader will, doubtless, peruse with all due indulgence, the joyful effusions of an ardent and intelligent country girl, who found herself suddenly introduced to the choicest society of the metropolis.

engaged with him at Sir Joshua's, Wednesday evening. What do you think of us?

I forgot to mention, that not finding Johnson in his little parlour when we came in, Hannah seated herself in his great chair, hoping to catch a little ray of his genius; when he heard it, he laughed heartily, and told her it was a chair in which he never sat. He said it reminded him of Boswell and himself when they stopt a night at the spot (as they imagined) where the Weird Sisters appeared to Macbeth: the idea so worked upon their enthusiasm, that it quite deprived them of rest: however, they learnt, the next morning, to their mortification, that they had been deceived, and were quite in another part of the country.

Johnson afterwards mentioned to Miss Reynolds how much he had been touched with the enthusiasm which was visible in the whole manner of the young authoress, and which was evidently genuine and unaffected. Such was the first introduction of Hannah More into the world of literature; an introduction which had far exceeded her modest expectations, and more than gratified the thirst she had so early felt for intellectual society. She returned with her sisters to Bristol, after a six-weeks' residence in town, which she again visited in the February of the following year, 1775.

We shall now best make out the details of some years of her life, by extracts from her letters, written chiefly to her sisters in the country, with the carelessness and freedom of one who wrote only

for the bosom and the fire-side, and not for the world. Indeed, she never attempted what are called *good* letters herself, or much valued them in others. She used to say, 'If I want wisdom, sentiment, or information, I can find them much better in books. What I want in a letter, is the picture of my friend's mind, and the common course of his life. I want to know what he is saying and doing; I want him to turn out the inside of his heart to me, without disguise, without appearing better than he is; without writing for a character. I have the same feeling in writing to him. My letter is, therefore, worth nothing to an indifferent person, but it is of value to the friend who cares for me.' She added, that letters among near relations were family newspapers, meant to convey paragraphs of intelligence, and advertisements of projects, and not sentimental essays.

Miss H. More to one of her sisters.

London, 1775.

Our first visit was to Sir Joshua's, where we were received with all the friendship imaginable. I am going, to-day, to a great dinner: Nothing can be conceived so absurd, extravagant, and fantastical, as the present mode of dressing the head. Simplicity and modesty are things so much exploded, that the very names are no longer remembered. I have just escaped from one of the most fashionable disfigurers; and though I charged him to dress me with the greatest simplicity, and to have only a very distant eye upon the fashion, just enough to

avoid the pride of singularity, without running into ridiculous excess; yet in spite of all these sage didactics, I absolutely blush at myself, and turn to the glass with as much caution as a vain beauty, just risen from the small-pox; which cannot be a more disfiguring disease than the present mode of dressing. Of the one, the calamity may be greater in its consequences, but of the other it is more corrupt in its cause. We have been reading a treatise on the morality of Shakspeare; it is a happy and easy way of filling a book that the present race of authors have arrived at—that of criticising the works of some eminent poet; with monstrous extracts and short remarks. It is a species of cookery I begin to grow tired of; they cut up their authors into chops, and by adding a little crumbled bread of their own, and tossing it up a little, they present it as a fresh dish: you are to dine upon the poet; —the critic supplies the garnish; yet has the credit, as well as profit, of the whole entertaiment.

From the same to the same.

London, 1775.

I had yesterday the pleasure of dining in Hill Street, Berkeley Square, *at a certain Mrs. Montagu's, a name not totally obscure.* The party consisted of herself, Mrs. Carter, Dr. Johnson, Solander, and Matty, Mrs. Boscawen, Miss Reynolds, and Sir Joshua, (the idol of every company); some other persons of high rank and less wit, and your humble servant,—a party that would not have dis-

graced the table of Lælius, or of Atticus. I felt myself a worm, the more a worm for the consequence which was given me, by mixing me with such a society; but, as I told Mrs. Boscawen, and with great truth, I had an opportunity of making an experiment of my heart, by which I learnt that I was not envious, for I certainly did not repine at being the meanest person in company.

Mrs. Montagu received me with the most encouraging kindness; she is not only the finest genius, but the finest lady I ever saw: she lives in the highest style of magnificence; her apartments and table are in the most splendid taste: but what baubles are these when speaking of a Montagu! her form (for she has no *body*) is delicate even to fragility; her countenance the most animated in the world; the sprightly vivacity of fifteen, with the judgment and experience of a Nestor. But I fear she is hastening to decay very fast; her spirits are so active, that they must soon wear out the little frail receptacle that holds them. Mrs. Carter has in her person a great deal of what the gentlemen mean when they say such a one is a 'poetical lady;' however, independently of her great talents and learning, I like her much; she has affability, kindness, and goodness; and I honour her heart even more than her talents: but I do not like one of them better than Mrs. Boscawen; she is at once polite, learned, judicious, and humble, and Mrs. Palk tells me, her letters are not thought inferior to Mrs. Montagu's. She regretted (so did I,) that so many suns could not possibly shine at one time;

but we are to have a smaller party, where, from fewer luminaries, there may emanate a clearer, steadier, and more beneficial light. Dr. Johnson asked me how I liked the new tragedy of Braganza. I was afraid to speak before them all, as I knew a diversity of opinion prevailed among the company: however, as I thought it a less evil to dissent from the opinion of a fellow-creature, than to tell a falsity, I ventured to give my sentiments; and was satisfied with Johnson's answering, 'You are right, madam.'

From Miss Sarah More to one of her sisters.

London, 1775.

Tuesday evening we drank tea at Sir Joshua's, with Dr. Johnson. Hannah is certainly a great favourite. She was placed next him, and they had the entire conversation to themselves. They were both in remarkably high spirits; it was certainly her lucky night! I never heard her say so many good things. The old genius was extremely jocular, and the young one very pleasant. You would have imagined we had been at some comedy had you heard our peals of laughter. They, indeed, tried which could 'pepper the highest,' and it is not clear to me that the lexicographer was really the highest seasoner. Yesterday Mr. Garrick called upon us; a volume of Pope lay upon the table; we asked him to read; and he went through the latter part of the 'Essay on Man.' He was exceedingly good-humoured, and expressed himself quite de-

lighted with our eager desire for information; and when he had satisfied one interrogatory, said, 'Now, madam, what next!' He read several lines we had been disputing about with regard to emphasis, in many different ways, before he decided which was right. He sat with us from half-past twelve till three, reading and criticising. We have just had a call from Mr. Burke.

We will now present an extract from another of our author's letters to one of her sisters.

London, 1775.

'Bear me, some God, O quickly bear me hence,
To wholesome solitude, the nurse of ——'

'Sense,' I was going to add in the words of Pope, till I recollected that *pence* had a more appropriate meaning, and was as good a rhyme. This apostrophe broke from me on coming from the opera, the first I ever *did*, the last I trust I ever *shall* go to. For what purpose has the Lord of the universe made his creature man with a comprehensive mind? Why make him a little lower than the angels? Why give him the faculty of thinking, the powers of wit and memory; and to crown all, an immortal and never-dying spirit? Why all this wondrous waste, this prodigality of bounty, if the mere animal senses of sight and hearing (by which he is not distinguished from the brutes that perish) would have answered the end as well; and yet I find the same people are seen at the opera every night—an amusement written in a language the

greater part of them do not understand, and performed by such a set of beings!

But the man

'Who bade the reign commence
Of rescued nature and reviving sense.'

sat at my elbow, and reconciled me to my situation, not by his approbation, but his presence. Going to the opera, like getting drunk, is a sin that carries its own punishment with it, and that a very severe one. Thank my dear Dr. S—— for his kind and seasonable admonitions on my last Sunday's engagement at Mrs. Montagu's. Conscience had done its office before; nay, was busy at the time: and if it did not dash the cup of pleasure to the ground, infused at least a tincture of wormwood into it. I *did* think of the alarming call, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" and I thought of it to-night at the opera.

From the same to the same.

Sunday night, 9 o'clock.

Perhaps you will say I ought to have thought of it again to-day, when I tell you I have dined abroad; but it is a day I reflect on without those uneasy sensations one has when one is conscious it has been spent in trifling company. I have been at Mrs. Boscawen's. Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Chapone, and myself only were admitted. We spent the time, not as wits, but as reasonable creatures; better characters, I trow. The conversation was sprightly but serious. I have not enjoyed

an afternoon so much since I have been in town. There was much sterling sense, and they are all ladies of high character for piety; of which, however, I do not think their visiting on Sundays any proof: for though their conversation is edifying, the example is bad. You do not, I presume, expect I should send you a transcript of the conversation: I have told you the interlocutors, but you are not to expect the dialogue. Patty says if she had such rich subjects, she could make a better hand of them: I believe her: my outlines are perhaps more just, but she beats me all to nothing in the colouring. She is but a young painter, and is fond of drapery and ornament: for my own part the more I see of the 'honoured, famed, and great,' the more I see of the littleness, the unsatisfactoriness of all created good; and that no earthly pleasure can fill up the wants of the immortal principle within. One need go no farther than the company I have just left, to be convinced that 'pain is for man,' and that fortune, talents, and science are no exemption from the universal lot. Mrs. Montagu, eminently distinguished for wit and virtue, 'the wisest where all are wise,' is hastening to insensible decay by a slow, but sure hectic. Mrs. Chapone has experienced the severest reverses of fortune; and Mrs. Boscawen's life has been a continued series of afflictions, which may almost bear a parallel with those of the righteous man of Uz. Tell me, then, what is it to be wise? This you will say is exhibiting the unfavourable side of the picture of humanity, but it is the right side, the side that shows the likeness.

London, 1775.

I have read Sir Joshua's last discourse at the academy: in my poor judgment it is a masterpiece for matter as well as style, and that we have scarcely a finer writer. I have told the Reynolds's how angry I am with Burke for an unhandsome paragraph on the Dean of Gloucester (Dr. Tucker). They are warm friends, but I would not give up my point. They seem to think that the man and the politician are different things: but I do not see why a person should not be bound to speak truth in the House of Commons as much as in his own house.[1]

At the end of another six weeks, Hannah More again returned to her family, and paid her next visit to London in the January of 1776.

During her residence at home she one day laughingly said to her sisters, 'I have been so fed with praise and flattering attentions, that I think I will venture to try what is my real value, by writing a slight poem, and offering it to Cadell myself.' In a fortnight after this idea was started, she had completed the legendary tale of 'Sir Eldred of the Bower;' to which she added the little poem of the 'Bleeding Rock,' which she had written some years previously. Upon her presenting it to Mr. Cadell, he offered her a price which exceeded her idea of its worth; very handsomely adding, that if she

[1] Mrs. H. More has frequently mentioned, as a curious coincidence, that Edmund Burke, Dean Tucker, and Mrs. Macauley called upon her in Park Street, Bristol, on the same morning, fortunately in succession, as they were all at that time writing against each other.

could hereafter discover what Goldsmith obtained for 'the Deserted Village,' he would make up the sum, be it what it might. This treaty was the beginning of a connection with Mr. Cadell, which was carried on through an intercourse of nearly forty years, with a reciprocity of esteem and regard that suffered no interruption.[1]

A letter from Mrs. Montagu, succeeded by one from Mr. Richard Burke, brother of him who has made that name so illustrious, will testify the esteem in which those early essays of her muse were held.

Hill Street, Dec. 26, 1775.

DEAR MADAM,

If the report of my being in France had delayed my having the pleasure of reading your late publication,[2] it had done me unintended injury: but I had received great delight from the work the very morning it first appeared; and the kind attention you have shown to me, by your letter to Mrs. Boscawen and Mr. Cadell, flatters me in the most agreeable manner.

While you are doing so much honour to your sex in general by your works, and so much in particular to me, by judging me worthy to possess them, you must excuse me for intruding upon you with my remarks. I admire the felicity of your muse, in being able to do equal justice to the calm

[1] It may be worth mentioning, as rather a curious coincidence, that Mr. Cadell was a native of the same village as herself, though they were entirely strangers to each other till this negociation introduced them to an acquaintance.

[2] Sir Eldred of the Bower.

magnanimity of the Romans, and the spirit and fire of the gothic character. If I were writing to any one but yourself, I should indulge in making a thousand remarks on the beautiful simplicity of your tale; the propriety of the manners, so suited to the ancient times; the sentiments so natural to the different characters; the just distinction between the unchecked transport of inexperienced youth, and the guarded rapture of a breast

'Which many a grief had known.'

Let me beg you, my dear Madam, to allow your muse still to adorn British names and British places. Wherever you lead the fairy dance, flowers will spring up. Your Rock[1] will stand unimpaired by ages, as eminent as any in the Grecian Parnassus. But I forget that I am trespassing on your time, even while I am reflecting how advantageously to others, and honourably to yourself, it may be employed. Excuse this intrusion, believe me with the highest regard, dear Madam,

Your most obedient humble servant,

ELIZABETH MONTAGU.

Dr. Johnson is to dine with me on Thursday. We shall have the pleasure of talking of you.

From Mr. Richard Burke to Miss H. More.

Cecil Street, Jan. 19, 1776.

MADAM,

I should have ill deserved the very flattering honour you have been pleased to do me, had I wil-

[1] The little poem called 'The Bleeding Rock.'

lingly delayed my acknowledgments so long after you had conferred it. I came to town the night before last, and only then received your most acceptable present. I immediately read that copy in which my pride was so much interested. That passion, justifiable only by the cause, gave all the charms of novelty to those beauties which had lost nothing of their effect and power by intimate acquaintance. My brother's bookseller by his direction sent him your truly elegant and tender performance. The poems made a great and certainly the best part of our entertainment in the country; and it was before my judgment was biassed by the flattering attention you were so condescending as to show me, that the 'decies repetita' was applied to your work with great sincerity.

I beg your acceptance of my very hearty thanks for the pleasure and honour you have been pleased to do me, of which I am not totally unworthy, because I have a just and therefore a very high sense of the value of the present, and of the uncommon merit of the giver.

Be so good as to present my most respectful compliments to your sisters, and to believe me,

Your most obedient and
Most obliged humble servant,
RICHARD BURKE.

From Miss Sarah More to Miss Martha More.

London, 1776.

From Miss Reynolds we learnt that Sir Eldred is the theme of conversation in all polite circles, and

that the beauteous Bertha has kindled a flame in the cold bosom of Johnson, who declares that her parent has but one fault; which is, suffering herself to graze on the barren rocks of Bristol, while the rich pastures of London are guarded by no fence which could exclude her from them. He praised the elegant turn of the dedication, and said the compliment was without precedent. We have had a very fine dinner and fine company at Sir Joshua's: but he shines more in a *partie quarrèe*, than in a large circle, owing to his deafness. I forgot to tell you that Mr. Garrick has read Sir Eldred to us; and henceforward let never man attempt to read before me, if he read worse.

Miss H. More to one of her sisters.

London, 1776.

Just returned from spending one of the most agreeable days of my life, with the female Mæcenas of Hill Street; she engaged me five or six days ago to dine with her, and had assembled half the wits of the age. The only fault that charming woman has, is, that she is fond of collecting too many of them together at one time. There were nineteen persons assembled at dinner, but after the repast, she has a method of dividing her guests, or rather letting them assort themselves into little groups of five or six each. I spent my time in going from one to the other of these little societies, as I happened more or less to like the subjects they were discussing. Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Montagu's sister, a very good writer, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Bar-

bauld, and a man of letters, whose name I have forgotten, made up one of these little parties. When we had canvassed two or three subjects, I stole off and joined in with the next group, which was composed of Mrs. Montagu, Dr. Johnson, the Provost of Dublin, and two other ingenious men. In this party there was a diversity of opinions, which produced a great deal of good argument and reasoning. There were several other groups less interesting to me, as they were composed more of rank than talent, and it was amusing to see how the people of sentiment singled out each other, and how the fine ladies and pretty gentlemen naturally slid into each other's society.

I had the happiness to carry Dr. Johnson home from Hill Street, though Mrs. Montagu publicly declared she did not think it prudent to trust us together, with such a declared affection on both sides. She said she was afraid of a Scotch elopement. He has invited himself to drink tea with us to-morrow, that we may read Sir Eldred together. I shall not tell you what he said of it, but to me the best part of his flattery was, that he repeats all the best stanzas by heart, with the energy, though not with the grace of a Garrick.

. . . . . .

London, 1776.

Let the Muses shed tears, for Garrick has this day sold the patent of Drury Lane Theatre, and will never act after this winter. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* He retires with all his blushing honours thick about him, his laurels as green as in their

early spring. Who shall supply his loss to the stage? Who shall now hold the master-key of the human heart? Who direct the passions with more than magic power? Who purify the stage; and who, in short, shall direct and nurse my dramatic muse?

Yesterday was another of the few sunshiny days with which human life is so scantly furnished. We spent it at Garrick's: he was in high good humour, and inexpressibly agreeable. Here was likely to have been another jostling and intersecting of our pleasures; but as they knew Johnson would be with us at seven, Mrs. Garrick was so good as to dine a little after three, and all things fell out in comfortable succession. We were at the reading of a new tragedy, and insolently and unfeelingly pronounced against it. We got home in time: I hardly ever spent an evening more pleasantly or profitably. Johnson, full of wisdom and piety, was very communicative. To enjoy Dr. Johnson perfectly, one must have him to oneself, as he seldom cares to speak in mixed parties. Our tea was not over till nine; we then fell upon Sir Eldred: he read both poems through; suggested some little alterations in the first, and did me the honour to write one whole stanza;[1] but in the Rock he has not altered a word. Though only a tea visit, he staid with us till twelve. I was quite at my ease, and never once asked him to eat (drink he never does any thing but tea); while you, I dare say,

[1] The stanza begins 'My scorn has oft,' &c.

would have been fidgeted to death, and would have sent half over the town for chickens, and oysters, and asparagus, and Madeira. You see how frugal it is to be well-bred, and not to think of such a vulgar renovation as eating and drinking.

London, 1776.

Again I am annoyed by the foolish absurdity of the present mode of dress. Some ladies carry on their heads a large quantity of fruit, and yet they would despise a poor useful member of society, who carried it there for the purpose of selling it for bread. Some, at the back of their perpendicular caps, hang four or five ostrich feathers, of different colours, &c. Spirit of Addison! thou pure and gentle shade, arise! thou who, with such fine humour, and such polished sarcasm, didst lash the cherry-coloured hood, and the party patches; and cut down, with a trenchant sickle, a whole harvest of follies and absurdities! awake! for the follies thou didst lash were but the beginning of follies; and the absurdities thou didst censure, were but the seeds of absurdities! Oh, that thy master-spirit, speaking and chiding in thy graceful page, could recal the blushes, and collect the scattered and mutilated remnants of female modesty!

We find another letter from one of her sisters, written about the same time, from which we shall make a humourous extract.

London, 1776.

If a wedding should take place before our return, don't be surprised,—between the mother of Sir Eldred, and the father of my much-loved Irene; nay, Mrs. Montagu says if tender words are the precursors of connubial engagements, we may expect great things; for it is nothing but 'child'—'little fool'—'love,' and 'dearest.' After much critical discourse, he turns round to me, and with one of his most amiable looks, which must be seen to form the least idea of it, he says, 'I have heard that you are engaged in the useful and honourable employment of teaching young ladies.' Upon which, with all the same ease, familiarity, and confidence, we should have done had only our own dear Dr. Stonehouse been present, we entered upon the history of our birth, parentage, and education; shewing how we were born with more desires than guineas; and how, as years increased our appetites, the cupboard at home began to grow too small to gratify them; and how, with a bottle of water, a bed, and a blanket, we sat out to seek our fortunes; and how we found a great house, with nothing in it; and how it was like to remain so, till, looking into our knowledge-boxes, we happened to find a little *larning*, a good thing when land is gone, or rather none: and so at last, by giving a little of this little *larning* to those who had less, we got a good store of gold in return; but how, alas! we wanted the wit to keep it—'I love you both,' cried the inamorato—I love you all five—I never was at Bristol.—I will

come on purpose to see you—what! five women live happily together!—I will come and see you—I have spent a happy evening—I am glad I came—God for ever bless you; you live lives to shame duchesses.' He took his leave with so much warmth and tenderness, that we were quite affected at his manner.

If Hannah's head stands proof against all the adulation and kindness of the great folks here, why then, I will venture to say that nothing of this kind will hurt her hereafter. A literary anecdote.—Mrs. Medalle (Sterne's daughter,) sent to all the correspondents of her deceased father, begging the letters which he had written to them; among other wits, she sent to Wilkes with the same request. He sent for answer, that as there happened to be nothing extraordinary in those he had received, he had burnt or lost them. On which, the faithful editor of her father's works sent back to say, that if Mr. Wilkes would be so good as to write a few letters in imitation of her father's style, it would do just as well, and she would insert them. —Two carriages at the door—Mrs. Boscawen and Sir Joshua; the latter to take us to an auction of pictures: the former paid a short visit, that she might not break in upon our engagements. Dr. Johnson and Hannah, last night, had a violent quarrel, till at length laughter ran so high on all sides, that argument was confounded in noise; the gallant youth, at one in the morning, set us down at our lodgings.

From Miss Martha More to one of her sisters.

Hampton, 1776.

We have been passing three days at the temple of taste, nature, Shakspeare, and Garrick; where every thing that could please the ear, charm the eye, and gratify the understanding, passed in quick succession. From dinner to midnight he entertained us in a manner infinitely agreeable. He read to us all the whimsical correspondence, in prose and verse, which, for many years, he had carried on with the first geniuses of this age. I have now seen him in his mellower light, when the world has been shaken off. He says he longs to enter into himself, and to study the more important duties of life, which he is determined upon doing: that his whole *domestique* shall be under such regulations of order and sobriety as shall be both a credit to himself and an example to others. The next time we go, Hannah is to carry some of her writing; she is to have a little table to herself, and to continue her studies; and he is to do the same.

The following extracts are from the letters of Hannah More to her family.

London, 1776.

I dined in the Adelphi yesterday. It was a particular occasion—an annual meeting, where none but men are usually asked. I was however of the party, and an agreeable day it was to me. I have seldom heard so much wit, under the banner of so

much decorum. I mention this, because I was told it was a day of licence, and that every body was to say what they pleased. Colman and Dr. Schomberg were of the party; the rest were chiefly old doctors of divinity. I had a private whisper that I must dine there again to-day, to assist at the celebration of the birth-day. We had a little snug dinner in the library. At six, I begged leave to come home, as I expected my *petite assemblée* a little after seven. Mrs. Garrick offered me all her fine things, but, as I hate admixtures of finery and meanness, I refused every thing except a little cream, and a few sorts of cakes. They came at seven. The *dramatis personæ* were, Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Garrick, and Miss Reynolds; my beaux were Dr. Johnson, Dean Tucker, and last, but not least in our love, David Garrick. You know that wherever Johnson is, the confinement to the tea-table is rather a durable situation; and it was an hour and a half before I got my enlargement. However, my ears were opened, though my tongue was locked, and they all stayed till near eleven.

Garrick was the very soul of the company, and I never saw Johnson in such perfect good humour. Sally knows we have often heard that one can never properly enjoy the company of these two unless they are together. There is great truth in this remark; for after the Dean and Mrs. Boscawen were withdrawn, and the rest stood up to go, Johnson and Garrick began a close encounter, telling old stories, 'e'en from their boyish days,' at Lichfield. We all stood round them above

an hour, laughing in defiance of every rule of decorum and Chesterfield. I believe we should not have thought of sitting down or of parting, had not an impertinent watchman been saucily vociferous. Johnson outstaid them all, and sat with me half an hour.

I'll tell you the most ridiculous circumstance in the world. After dinner Garrick took up the Monthly Review (civil gentlemen, by the bye, these Monthly Reviewers), and read 'Sir Eldred' with all his pathos and all his graces. I think I never was so ashamed in my life; but he read it so superlatively, that I cried like a child. Only think what a scandalous thing, to cry at the reading of one's own poetry! I could have beaten myself; for it looked as if I thought it very moving, which, I can truly say, was far from being the case. But the beauty of the jest lies in this: Mrs. Garrick twinkled as well as I, and made as many apologies for crying at her husband's reading, as I did for crying at my own verses. *She* got out of the scrape by pretending she was touched at the story, and *I*, by saying the same thing of the reading. It furnished us with a great laugh at the catastrophe, when it would really have been decent to have been a little sorrowful.

London, 1776.

Did I ever tell you what Dr. Johnson said to me of my friend the Dean of Gloucester? I asked him what he thought of him. His answer was *verbatim* as follows; 'I look upon the Dean of Gloucester to be one of the few excellent writers of this period. I

differ from him in opinion, and have expressed that difference in my writings; but I hope what I wrote did not indicate what I did not feel, for I felt no acrimony. No person, however learned, can read his writings without improvement. He is sure to find something he did not know before.' I told him the Dean did not value himself on elegance of style.[1] He said he knew nobody whose style was more perspicuous, manly, and vigorous, or better suited to his subject. I was not a little pleased with this tribute to the worthy Dean's merit, from such a judge of merit; that man, too, professedly differing from him in opinion.

Would you believe it? In the midst of all the pomps and vanities of this wicked town, I have taken it into my head to study like a dragon; I read four or five hours every day, and wrote ten hours yesterday. How long this will last I do not know—but I fear no longer than the bad weather. I wish you could see a picture Sir Joshua has just finished, of the prophet Samuel, on his being called. 'The gaze of young astonishment' was never so beautifully expressed. Sir Joshua tells me that he is exceedingly mortified when he shows this picture to some of the great—they ask him who Samuel was? I told him he must get somebody to make

[1] Hannah More having once asked the Dean, Whether it might not be advisable to polish his style rather more? 'Oh, no,' he replied, 'they don't expect a fine style from me. All that I care for are the authenticity of my facts, and the truth of my principles.' He never failed to communicate his political pamphlets to her; and when she represented to him that such subjects were out of the reach of her comprehension, he would answer, 'Pish! no such thing! common sense will ever appeal to common sense.

an Oratorio of Samuel, and then it would not be vulgar to confess they knew something of him. He said he was glad to find that I was intimately acquainted with that devoted prophet. He has also done a St. John that bids fair for immortality. I tell him that I hope the poets and painters will at last bring the Bible into fashion, and that people will get to like it from taste, though they are insensible to its spirit, and afraid of its doctrines. I love this great genius, for not being ashamed to take his subjects from the most unfashionable of all books.

Keeping bad company leads to all other bad things. I have got the headache to-day, by raking out so late with that gay libertine Johnson. Do *you* know—*I* did not, that he wrote a quarter of the Adventurer? I made him tell me all that he wrote in the 'fugitive pieces.'

De Lolme told me he thought Johnson's late political pamphlets were the best things he had written; but I regret that such men should ever write a word of politics.

Mrs. Garrick has obtained a ticket to carry me to the Pantheon with her and a party; but I could not get the better of my repugnance to these sort of places, and she was so good as to excuse me. I find my dislike of what are called public diversions greater than ever, except a play; and when Garrick has left the stage, I could be very well contented to relinquish plays also; and to live in London without ever again setting my foot in a public place.

Hampton, 1776.

I enclose you a little sonnet I sent the Garricks on their birth-day. I had but an hour to write it in, and had the headache, or it would have been better.

SONNET ON MR. AND MRS. GARRICK'S BIRTH-DAY.

ADDRESSED TO THE RIVER THAMES, AND WRITTEN IN THE TEMPLE AT HAMPTON.

O silver Thames, O gentle river, tell,
Since first thy green waves through yon meadow stray'd,
Hast thou a more harmonious pair survey'd
Than in these fairy-haunted gardens dwell?

I sing not of his muse, for well I ween
My song's unmarked where every bard approves,
Nor of his magic powers, which must be *seen*,
Not *told*—for telling lessens what it loves.

Nor do I celebrate her form or face,
Inglorious praise! for other nymphs are fair,
And other nymphs may boast a transient grace;
Though they must boast it when she is not there:—

Back to thy source, thou, gentle Thames, shalt flow,
Ere soul more tuned to soul, or mind to mind,
Thy margin ever green shall proudly show,
Or in her bands celestial concord bind.

Mrs. Boscawen has given me a very curious old Italian book, of which there are very few copies in the world: she is always thinking of some little thing to oblige me.

When I come back from Hampton I shall change

my lodgings; not that I have any particular objections to these, but those I have taken are much more airy, large, and elegant: besides the use, when I please, of the whole house, I shall have a bed-chamber and a dressing-room for my own particular company; the master and mistress are themselves well-behaved sensible people and keep good company; besides, they are fond of books, and can read, and have a shelf of books which they will lend me. The situation is pleasant and healthy—the centre house in the Adelphi.[1] Add to this, it is not a common lodging-house, they are careful whom they take in, and will have no people of bad character, or who keep irregular hours; so that on the whole, for the little time I remain in town, I think I shall be more comfortable in my new lodgings.

Adelphi, 1776.

Did I tell you we had a very agreeable day at Mrs. Boscawen's? I like Mr. Berenger[2] prodigiously. I met the Bunbury family at Sir Joshua's. Mr. Boswell (Corsican Boswell) was here last night; he is a very agreeable good-natured man; he perfectly adores Johnson; they have this day set out together for Oxford, Lichfield, &c, that the Doctor may take leave of all his old friends and acquaintances, previous to his great expedition across the Alps. I lament his undertaking such a journey at his time of life, with

[1] Garrick's town house.

[2] Richard Berenger, Esq. many years Gentleman of the Horse and Equerry to his late Majesty. He wrote a history of Horsemanship.

beginning infirmities; I hope he will not leave his bones on classic ground. I have here most spacious apartments, three rooms to myself. David Hume is at the point of death in a jaundice. Cadell told me to-day he had circulated six thousand of Price's book, and was rejoiced to hear that the Dean of Gloucester intended to answer it.

Adelphi, 1776.

We have had a great evening in the Adelphi: the principal people that I can now recollect were, Lord and Lady Camden, their daughters, Lady Chatham and daughters, Lord Dudley, Mr. Rigby, Mrs. Montagu, the Dean of Derry and lady. Sir Joshua and his sister, Colman, Berenger, &c. &c.

You would take Lord Camden for an elderly physician, though I think there is something of genius about his nose. Did I excel in the descriptive, here would be a fine field for me to expatiate on the graces of the host and hostess, whose behaviour was all cheerfulness and good breeding: but lords delight not me, no, nor ladies neither, unless they are very chosen ones.

A relation of the Duchess of Chandos died at the Duchess's a few days ago, at the card-table: she was dressed most sumptuously;—they stripped off her diamonds, stuck her upright in a coach, put in two gentlemen with her, and sent her home two hours after she was dead; at least so the story goes.

Baron Burland died as suddenly. After having been at the House of Lords he dined heartily, and

was standing by the fire, talking politics to a gentleman. So you see, even London has its warnings if it would but listen to them. These are two signal ones in one week: but the infatuation of the people is beyond anything that can be conceived.

A most magnificent hotel in St. James's Street was opened last night for the first time, by the name of the 'Savoir Vivre;' none but people of the very first rank were there, so you may conclude the diversion was cards; and in one night, the very first time the rooms were ever used, the enormous sum of sixty thousand pounds was lost! Heaven reform us!

We had the other night a conversazione at Mrs. Boscawen's. What a comfort for me that none of my friends play at cards. Soame Jenyns and the learned and ingenious Mr. Cambridge were of the party. We had a few sensible ladies, and a very agreeable day, till the world broke in upon us, and made us too large for conversation. The sensible Mrs. Walsingham was there, as was Mrs. Newton, who gave me many invitations to St. Paul's.[1] Mr. Jenyns was very polite to me, and as he, his lady, and I were the first visitants, he introduced me himself to everybody that came afterwards, who were strangers to me. There is a fine simplicity about him, and a meek innocent kind of wit, in Addison's manner, which is very pleasant. The kind Mrs. Boscawen had made another party

[1] The kindness and friendship of Bishop Newton and his lady to Mrs. H. More continued invariably through their lives.

for me at her house, with Mr. Berenger, who is everybody's favourite, (even Dr. Johnson's) but I am unluckily engaged.

Cumberland's odes are come out. I tried to prevail on Mr. Cambridge to read them, but could not: he has a natural aversion to an ode, as some people have to a cat: one of them is pretty, but another contains a literal description of administering a dose of James's powders! Why will a man who has real talents, attempt a species of writing for which he is so little qualified? But so little do we poor mortals know ourselves, that I should not be surprised, if he were to prefer these odes to his comedies, which have real merit.

London, 1776.

I dined yesterday with Captain[1] and Mrs. Middleton. Tell Dr. Stonehouse that I recommended the translation of Saurin's Sermons to Captain Middleton and Mrs. Bouverie. Captain M. intends writing to the doctor about them. How nobly eloquent they are! One little peculiarity I remark,— his more frequent use of the word *vice* than generally occurs in religious writings. I think sin is a theological, vice a moral, and crime a judicial term. There are so few people I meet with in this good town to whom one can venture to recommend sermons, that the opportunity is not to be lost; though the misfortune is, that those who are most willing to read them, happen to be the very people who least

[1] Afterwards Lord Barham.

want them. Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Carter, and some other of my friends, were there.

Mrs. Boscawen came to see me the other day with the duchess, in her gilt chariot, with four footmen (as I hear), for I happened not to be at home. It is not possible for anything on earth to be more agreeable to my taste than my present manner of living. I am so much at my ease: have a great many hours at my own disposal: read my own books, and see my own friends; and, whenever I please, may join the most polished and delightful society in the world! Our breakfasts are little literary societies. There is generally company at meals, as they think it saves time, by avoiding the necessity of seeing people at other seasons. Mr. Garrick sets the highest value upon his *time* of anybody I ever knew. From dinner to tea we laugh, chat, and talk nonsense: the rest of his time is generally devoted to study. I detest and avoid public places more than ever, and should make a miserably bad fine lady! What most people come to London *for*, would keep me *from* it. Garrick's verses on Sir Eldred make a great noise here: I enclose them.

ON SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER, BY ROSCIUS.

1.

Far from the reach of mortal grief,
Well, Stanhope, art thou fled;
Nor could'st thou, lord, now gain belief,
Tho' rising from the dead.

II.

Thy wit a female champion braves,
And blasts thy critic power;
She comes!—and in her hand she waves
Sir Eldred of the Bower.

III.

The victor's palm aloft she bears,
And sullen foes submit;
The laurel crown from man she tears,
And routs each lordly wit.

IV.

'A female work if this should prove,'
Cries out the beaten foe;
'Tis Pallas from the head of Jove,
Complete from top to toe.

V.

With feeling, elegance and force
Unite their matchless power;
And prove that from a heavenly source,
Springs Eldred of the Bower.'

VI.

'True'—cried the god of verse, 'tis mine,
And now the farce is o'er;
To vex proud man I wrote each line,
And gave them Hannah More.'

Adelphi, 1776.

I had promised Mr. Burrows I would certainly go to hear him at St. Clement's last Sunday, but was again disappointed. At Hampton Church we heard a frivolous clergyman preach one of those light compositions which it is impossible for one ever to think of again.

Alas! I dare not lie in bed in a morning, for the

Garricks are as much my conscience here as the doctor is at Bristol.[1] A few evenings ago we were at Mrs. Vesey's; Tessier read; we were a moderate party; not forty: the Duchess Dowager of Beaufort was there, Lady Betty Compton, Lord and Lady Spencer, Lord and Lady Bateman, and a dozen other lords and ladies for aught I know. The old duchess looks amazingly well; I do not know a finer woman of her age.

We expect a large party every minute to breakfast, all the sensible, ingenious French folks, whom I believe I have mentioned before, with Lord North, &c. I find Mr. Boswell called upon you at Bristol, with Dr. Johnson; he told me so this morning when he breakfasted here, with Sir William Forbes and Dr. J.

London, 1776.

We have been again spending three days at Hampton. On the first, we were visited by our noble neighbours, the Pembrokes; and on the third, we dined at Richmond, at Sir Joshua's, with a very ageeable party. It was select, though much too large to please me. There was hardly a person in company that I would not have chosen as eminently agreeable; but I would not have chosen them all together. Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Elliot, Edmund, Richard, and William Burke, Lord Mahon, David Garrick, and Sir Joshua. We had a great deal of laugh, as there were so many leaders among the

[1] Dr. Stonehouse.

patriots, and had a great deal of attacking and defending, with much wit and good humour.

Adelphi, 1776.

I wish it were possible for me to give you the slightest idea of the scene I was present at yesterday. Garrick would make me take his ticket to go to the trial of the Duchess of Kingston; a sight which, for beauty and magnificence, exceeded anything which those who were never present at a coronation, or a trial by peers, can have the least notion of. Mrs. Garrick and I were in full dress by seven. At eight we went to the Duke of Newcastle's, whose house adjoins Westminster Hall, in which he has a large gallery, communicating with the apartments in his house. You will imagine the bustle of five thousand people getting into one hall! yet in all this hurry, we walked in tranquilly. When they were all seated, and the king-at-arms had commanded silence on pain of imprisonment, (which, however, was very ill observed,) the gentleman of the black rod was commanded to bring in his prisoner. Elizabeth, calling herself Duchess Dowager of Kingston, walked in, led by black rod and Mr. la Roche, courtesying profoundly to her judges. When she bent, the lord steward called out, 'Madam, you may rise;' which, was taking her up before she was down. The peers made her a slight bow. The prisoner was dressed in deep mourning; a black hood on her head; her hair modestly dressed and powdered; a black silk sacque, with crape trimmings; black gauze, deep

ruffles, and black gloves. The counsel spoke about an hour and a quarter each. Dunning's manner is insufferably bad, coughing and spitting at every three words; but his sense and his expression, pointed to the last degree; he made her grace shed bitter tears. I had the pleasure of hearing several of the lords speak, though nothing more than proposals on common things. Among these were Lyttleton, Talbot, Townsend, and Camden. The fair victim had four virgins in white behind the bar. She imitated her great predecessor, Mrs. Rudd, and affected to write very often, though I plainly perceived she only wrote as they do their love epistles on the stage, without forming a letter. I must not omit one of the best things: we had only to open a door, to get at a very fine cold collation of all sorts of meats and wines, with tea, &c. a privilege confined to those who belonged to the Duke of Newcastle. I fancy the peeresses would have been glad of our places at the trial, for I saw Lady Derby and the Duchess of Devonshire with their workbags full of good things. Their rank and dignity did not exempt them from the 'villanous appetites' of eating and drinking.

Foote says that the Empress of Russia, the Duchess of Kingston, and Mrs. Rudd, are the three most extraordinary women in Europe; but the duchess disdainfully, and I think unjustly, excludes Mrs. Rudd from the honour of deserving to make one in the triple alliance. The duchess has but small remains of that beauty of which kings and princes were once so enamoured. She looked very

much like Mrs. Pritchard; she is large and ill shaped; there was nothing white but her face, and had it not been for that, she would have looked like a bale of bombazeen. There was a great deal of ceremony, a great deal of splendour, and a great deal of nonsense: they adjourned upon the most foolish pretences imaginable, and did *nothing* with such an air of business as was truly ridiculous. I forgot to tell you the duchess was taken ill, but performed it badly.

Adelphi, 1776.

We did not come to town till yesterday, and even then left Hampton with regret, as it is there we spend the pleasantest part of our time, uninterrupted by the idle, the gossipping, and the impertinent. On Tuesday, Lord and Lady Pembroke dined with us. The Countess is a pretty woman, and my Lord a good-humoured, lively, chatty man; but Roscius was, as usual, the life and soul of the company, and always says so many home things, pointed at the vices and follies of those with whom he converses, but in so indirect, well-bred, and good-humoured a manner, that every body must love him; and none but fools are ever offended, or will expose themselves so much as to own they are. Politicians say that there is a great prospect of an accommodation with America. Heaven grant it, before more human blood is spilt! But even this topic has, I think, a little given place to the trial. For my part, I cannot see why there should be so much ceremony used, to know whether an infamous woman has one

or two husbands. I think a *lieutenant de police* would be a better judge for her than the peers, and I do not see why she should not be tried by Sir John Fielding, as a profligate of less note would have been.

Adelphi, 1776.

I have the great satisfaction of telling you that Elizabeth, calling herself duchess-dowager of Kingston, was this very afternoon *undignified and unduchessed*, and very narrowly escaped being burned in the hand. If you have been half as much interested against this unprincipled, artful, licentious woman as I have, you will be rejoiced at it as I am. All the peers, but two or three (who chose to withdraw), exclaimed with great emphasis, 'Guilty, upon my honour!' except the Duke of N——, who said, 'Guilty erroneously, but not intentionally.' Great nonsense, by the bye, but peers are privileged.

On Wednesday, we had a very large party to dinner, consisting chiefly of French persons of distinction and talents, who are come over to take a last look at the beams of the great dramatic sun, before he sets. We had beaux esprit, femmes sçavantes, academicians, &c. and no English person except Mr. Gibbon, the Garricks, and myself. We had not one English sentence the whole day. Last night we were at our friends the Wilmots', in Bloomsbury Square. There was a great deal of good company—the Bishop of Worcester, his lady,

Sir Ralph Paine and lady, Mrs. Boscawen, and half a score others.

This morning Lord Camden breakfasted with us. He was very entertaining. He is very angry that the Duchess of Kingston was not burned in the hand. He says, as he was once a professed lover of her's, he thought it would have looked ill-natured and ungallant for him to propose it; but that he should have acceded to it most heartily, though he believes he should have recommended a cold iron.

This evening I am engaged to spend with a foreigner. He is a Dane, unjustly deprived of his father's fortune by his mother's marrying a second time. I have never yet seen him, but I hear that all the world is to be there, which I think is a little unfeeling, as he is low-spirited at times, even to madness. For my part, from what I have heard, I do not think the poor young man will live out the night.

Adelphi, 1776.

I imagine my last was not so ambiguous but that you saw well enough I staid in town to see Hamlet, and I will venture to say, that it was such an entertainment as will probably never again be exhibited to an admiring world. But this general panegyric can give you no idea of *my* feelings; and particular praise would be injurious to his excellencies.

In every part he filled the whole soul of the spectator, and transcended the most finished idea of the poet. The requisites for Hamlet are not

only various, but opposed. In him they are all united, and as it were concentrated. One thing I must particularly remark, that, whether in the simulation of madness, in the sinkings of despair, in the familiarity of friendship, in the whirlwind of passion, or in the meltings of tenderness, he never once forgot he was a prince; and in every variety of situation, and transition of feeling, you discovered the highest polish of fine breeding and courtly manners.

Hamlet experiences the conflict of many passions and affections, but filial love ever takes the lead; *that* is the great point from which he sets out, and to which he returns; the others are all contingent and subordinate to it, and are cherished or renounced, as they promote or obstruct the operation of this leading principle. Had you seen with what exquisite art and skill Garrick maintained the subserviency of the less to the greater interests, you would agree with me, of what importance to the perfection of acting, is that consummate good sense which always pervades every part of his performances.

To the most eloquent expression of the eye, to the hand-writing of the passions on his features, to a sensibility which tears to pieces the hearts of his auditors, to powers so unparalleled, he adds a judgment of the most exquisite accuracy, the fruit of long experience and close observation, by which he preserves every gradation and transition of the passions, keeping all under the controul of a just dependence and natural consistency. So naturally, indeed, do the ideas of the poet seem to mix with

his own, that he seemed himself to be engaged in a succession of affecting situations, not giving utterance to a speech, but to the instantaneous expression of his feelings, delivered in the most affecting tones of voice, and with gestures that belong only to nature. It was a fiction as delightful as fancy, and as touching as truth. A few nights before I saw him in 'Abel Drugger;' and had I not seen him in both, I should have thought it as possible for Milton to have written 'Hudibras,' and Butler 'Paradise Lost,' as for one man to have played 'Hamlet' and 'Drugger' with such excellence.

I found myself, not only in the best place, but with the best company in the house, for I sat next the orchestra, in which were a number of my acquaintance, (and those no vulgar names) Edmund and Richard Burke, Dr. Warton, and Sheridan.

Have you seen an ode to Mr. Pinchbeck, by the author of the 'Heroic Epistle?' There is a little slight sarcasm on Cumberland, the Dean of Gloucester, and Dr. Johnson. There is something of wit in it, but I think it is by no means worthy of the author of the 'Heroic Epistle,' which is, in my opinion, the best satire, both for matter and versification, that has appeared since the 'Dunciad.' I do not include Johnson's two admirable imitations of 'Juvenal,' which are more in the manner of Pope's other satires.

Extract of a letter from Miss H. More to the Rev. Dr. Stonehouse.

May, 1776.

I have at last had the entire satisfaction to see Garrick in 'Hamlet.' I would not wrong him or myself so much as to tell you what I think of it; it is sufficient that you have seen him; I pity those who have not. Posterity will never be able to form the slightest idea of his pretensions. The more I see him, the more I wonder and admire. Whenever he does any thing capital, they are so kind as to get me into the pit, which increases the pleasure ten-fold. He has acted all his comic characters for the last time. I have seen him within these three weeks take leave of Benedict, Sir John Brute, Kitely, Abel Drugger, Archer, and Leon. It seems to me, on these occasions, as if I had been assisting at the funeral obsequies of the different poets. I feel almost as much pain as pleasure. He is quite happy in the prospect of his release.

Miss H. More to Mrs. Gwatkin.

Adelphi, May 12, 1776.

A few nights before I saw Garrick in Hamlet, I had seen him in Abel Drugger; and, had I not seen him in both, I should have thought that it would have been as impossible for Milton to have written 'Hudibras,' and Butler 'Paradise Lost,' as for the

same man to have played Hamlet and Drugger with such superlative and finished excellence. The more admirable he is, the more painful it is to reflect that I am now catching his departing glories. He is one of those summer suns, which shine brightest at their setting. Within these three weeks, he has appeared in Brute, Leon, Drugger, Benedict, Archer, &c. for the last time; and it appears like assisting at the funeral obsequies of these individual characters. When I see him play any part for the last time, I can only compare my mixed sensations of pain and pleasure to what I suppose I should feel, if a friend were to die and leave me a rich legacy. There is a certain sentiment of gratification and delight in the acquisition; but as you are beginning to indulge in it, it is all of a sudden checked, by recollecting on what terms you possess it, and that you purchase your pleasure at the costly price of losing him to whom you owe it.

I wrote the above two or three days ago, and intended to have sent it immediately; but happening to show it to Mrs. G. she was so pleased with my remarks on Hamlet and the performance, that they insisted on having a copy. Though they paid my foolish letter an undeserved compliment, yet I could not refuse to comply, and not having time to transcribe it, is the reason you did not hear from me sooner.

I am surprised to find myself still here. Could I have had the least idea of my remaining so long after I wrote to you last, I should not foolishly have deprived myself of the satisfaction of hearing

from you. But though I have not heard *from* you, I have frequently heard *of* you. I fancy my sisters will have set out on their western excursion before I shall see Bristol. I doubt not but they will find it a very pleasant scheme, and to Martha I hope it will be a beneficial one.

I last night saw Don Felix for the first time; it is an elegant and pleasing part, but Mrs. Yates did great injustice to the genteel character of Violante, in which Mrs. Barry got so much reputation, when she played it with Mr. Garrick. On Monday night he played King Lear, and it is literally true that my spirits have not yet recovered from the shock they sustained. I generally think the last part I see him in the greatest: but in regard to that night, it was the universal opinion that it was one of the greatest scenes ever exhibited. I called to-day in Leicester Fields, and Sir Joshua declared it was full three days before he got the better of it. The eagerness of people to see him is beyond any thing you can have an idea of. You will see half-a-dozen duchesses and countesses of a night, in the upper boxes: for the fear of not seeing him at all, has humbled those who used to go, not for the purpose of seeing, but of being seen; and they now courtesy to the ground for the worst places in the house.

I dined lately with your neighbour, Mr. Elliot, whom I like exceedingly; Mr. Gibbon, the three Burkes, Lord Mahon, and Lord Pitt were of the party. What a list of patriots! A few nights ago, we had an agreeable evening at Mrs. Vesey's; you

know she is a favourite of mine, and indeed of every body that has the pleasure of knowing her.

We go to-morrow to smell the lilacs and syringas at Hampton. I long for the sweet tranquillity of that delicious retreat. We generally spend a day or two in a week there, particularly Sunday, which is no small relief to me.

How does your garden grow? Are your shrubs flourishing? I reckon the Bristol misses will be delighted with your charming prospect. My love to squire Edward. I have not time to look over this scrawl. My kind regards at the vicarage. Adieu, dear Madam,

Your's constantly and sincerely,

H. More.

I have been to the Adelphi. Garrick gave me the history of his reading to the king and queen, and went through the fable of the 'Blackbird and Royal Eagle,' which was his prologue. It is really very lively and entertaining. Some part of it is affecting, where he speaks of the sprightly blackbird, who was famous for his imitative powers, and could exactly mimic from the tender notes of the nightingale, to the low comic noises of the crow and magpie. But one day, happening to look on his once fine glossy plumage, he found that his feathers began to turn grey, his eye had lost its lustre; and he also began to be lame. This determined him to give up his mimicry, and he resolved to be silent, and not hop about from tree to tree, but confine himself to one snug bush. The royal eagle, how-

ever, hearing of the talents of the lively creature, sent for him to court, and insisted on hearing him sing. This honour overturned all his prudent resolution; he found his feathers were restored to their native black, his eye resumed its fire, and he was himself again.

I could not get away till late, though I was engaged at Mrs. Boscawen's, to meet by appointment a party. It was a *conversazione*, but composed of rather too many people: one is used to small parties there, which I like much better. To my mortification, I arrived the last of the whole company. I was placed between the Duchess of Beaufort and Lady Edgcombe; these two ladies, with Mr. Jenyns and myself, made a snug group. My old acquaintance Mr. Burrows was there, Mr. and Mrs. Cole, Lady Juliana Penn, and many other people of quality.

London, 1776.

Yesterday, good and dear Mrs. Boscawen came herself to fetch me to meet at dinner a lady I have long-wished to see. This was Mrs. Delany. She was a Granville, and niece to the celebrated poet Lord Lansdowne. She was the friend and intimate of Swift. She tells a thousand pleasant anecdotes relative to the publication of the Tatler. As to the Spectator, it is almost too modern for her to speak of it. She was in the next room, and heard the cries of alarm when Guiscard stabbed Lord Oxford. In short, she is a living library of knowledge; and time, which has so highly matured her

judgment, has taken very little from her graces or her liveliness. She has invited me to visit her; a singular favour from one of her years and character. Last night, I was again at Mrs. Boscawen's, where there was a very splendid assembly; there were above forty people, most of them of the first quality, but I am sure I shall not remember half of them. The Duchess of Beaufort, Lady Scarsdale, her sister, Lord and Lady Radnor, Lady Ranelagh, Lady Onslow, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, Lord and Lady Clifford, Captain and Mrs. Middleton, and Mrs. Bouverie. Though the party was so large, the evening was far from being disagreeable, for, as there were only two card-tables, one could always make a little party for conversation. Our hostess was all herself, easy, well-bred, and in every place at once; and so attentive to every individual, that I dare say everybody, when they got home, thought as I did, that they alone had been the immediate object of her attention.

I forgot to tell you I have just been to see Mrs. Montagu. I made it a point to go in the morning; thinking I might stand a chance of catching her alone, which indeed, to my great delight, I did; but just as we were beginning to enter into interesting conversation, the world, as usual, broke in.

CHAPTER III.

In the beginning of June, 1776, Hannah More returned to Bristol after a six months' absence, four of which had been passed between the Adelphi and Hampton. It was remarked by her friends and family, that success and applause had made no change in her deportment. She brought back her native simplicity unsullied by the contact. The constitution of her mind was so opposed to affectation and art, that rank, literature, and fashion saw the bird escape as from the snare of the fowler, without losing a feather of its natural plumage, to soar at large in its own free element, and revisit its accustomed scenes.

We will here introduce two or three letters which passed about this time.

H. More to Mr. Garrick.

June 10, 1776.

I have devoured the newspapers for the last week with the appetite of a famished politician, to

learn if my general had yet laid down arms; but I find you go on with a true American spirit, destroying thousands of his Majesty's liege subjects, breaking the limbs of many, and the hearts of all. When I promised you I would not plague you with any of my nonsense till you were disengaged, could I possibly divine you would be so very good as to honour me with a letter?—aye, and a charming letter too, albeit a little one—it made me so proud and happy! But you are so used to make folks proud and happy that it is nothing to you; and what would be a violent effort to other people, slides naturally into your ordinary course of action.

I think, by the time this reaches you I may congratulate you on the end of your labours and the completion of your fame—a fame which has had no parallel, and will have no end. Yet whatever reputation the world may ascribe to you, I, who have had the happy privilege of knowing you intimately, shall always think you derived your greatest glory from the temperance with which you enjoyed it, and the true greatness of mind with which you lay it down. Surely, to have suppressed your talents in the moment of your highest capacity for exercising them, does as much honour to your heart as the exertion itself did to your dramatic character; but I cannot trust myself with this subject, because I am writing to the man himself; yet I ought to be indulged, for is not the recollection of my pleasures all that is left me of them? Have I not seen in one season that man

act seven-and-twenty-times, and rise each time in excellence, and shall I be silent? Have I not spent three months under the roof of that man and his dear charming lady, and received from them favours that would take me another three months to tell over, and shall I be silent?

But highly as I enjoy your glory, (for I do enjoy it most heartily, and seem to partake it too, as I think some rays of it fall on all your friends) yet I tremble for your health. It is impossible you can do so much mischief to the nerves of other people without hurting your own,—in Richard especially, where your murders are by no means confined to the Tower; but you assassinate all such of your audience as have hearts. I say, I tremble lest you should suffer for all this; but it is now over, as I hope are the bad effects of it upon yourself. You may break your wand at the end of your trial, when you lay down the office of haut intendant of the passions; but the enchantment it raised you can never break, while the memories and feelings remain of those who were ever admitted into the magic circle.

This letter is already of a good impudent length, and to the person, of all others, who has the least time to read nonsense. I will not prolong my impertinence but to beg and conjure that I may hear a little bit about your finishing night. The least scrap—printed or manuscript—paragraph or advertisement—merry or serious—verse or prose, will be thankfully received, and hung up in the temple of reliques.

Pray tell my sweet Mrs. Garrick I live on the hope of hearing from her. And tell her further that she and you have performed a miracle, for you have loaded one person with obligations, and have not made an ingrate.

Viva V. M. mille annos.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1776.

I wish you could have seen with what delight I received your kind and agreeable letter, my dear Madam. It was only a change from talking about you to talking with you; for it came precisely as a gentleman went out of the door, with whom I had held a long dispute upon your subject. That gentleman was Mr. Cambridge, and the dispute was about your charming *Dragon*,[1] which he admired beyond what I can tell you; and says it must absolutely be printed, lest a false copy get out. I did not contend that it *must not* be printed, but I assured him I would not give him a copy of it. He said he had almost learned it by heart, in only twice hearing it read by Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom I lent it, under an oath not to *take* or *give* a copy of it; which condition he strictly kept, like a faithful knight; but he too is of Mr. Cambridge's opinion, both in admiring this charming bagatelle, and in desiring that it should be printed. I trust then, my dear Madam, you will yield to these advisers, since both, you will allow,

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complimented for it too; and when an author really deserves praise, nothing is more delightful or more proper than to give it. A slowness to applaud, betrays a cold temper, or an envious spirit. I am very well. I eat brown bread and custards like a native; and we have a pretty, agreeable, laudable custom of getting tipsy twice a day upon Herefordshire cider. The other night, we had a great deal of company, eleven damsels, to say nothing of men. I protest I hardly do them justice, when I pronounce that they had, amongst them, on their heads, an acre and a half of shrubbery, besides slopes, grass-plats, tulip-beds, clumps of peonies, kitchen-gardens, and green-houses.[1] Mrs. Cotton and I had an infinite deal of entertainment out of them, though, to our shame be it spoken, some of them were cousins; but I have no doubt that they held in great contempt our roseless heads, and leafless necks.

1777.

We are just returned from an excursion through Norfolk, of about one hundred and sixty miles, to the extreme verge of the county, and nothing was ever more agreeable. Mr. and Mrs. Cotton and myself went comfortably in their chariot; and the only interruption was an attack of one of my headaches. As I do not excel in descriptions, you will

[1] To this incredible but fashionable folly, Garrick put an end, by appearing in the character of Sir John Brute, dressed in female attire, with his cap decorated with a profusion of every sort of vegetable,—an immensely large carrot being dependent from each side.

not expect a minute detail of every thing I saw; however, as I know it will entertain my father even to know that I have been to such and such places, I will mention some that I can recollect. After Norwich, Dereham, and Swaffham, we went to the seat of the late Sir Andrew Fountaine, a very agreeable house, well-furnished, with a few good pictures, and one or two fine statues; many curiosities, particularly a large closet furnished with the most beautiful Delft-ware that can be imagined, much prettier, and more shewy, than china. The housekeeper, with an urbanity rarely to be found among the dependents of the great, very obligingly entertained us with cakes and wine.

We come now to Castle Acre, a very fine piece of ruins, which it would cost an honest citizen who loves bow-windows, highway prospects, Chinese railing, chapel-looking stables, and steeples upon malt-houses, a thousand a year to keep in repair. It is not so large as Kenilworth, nor so beautiful as Tintern; but it has a considerable share of magnificence, and no small portion of beauty. It is so old that tradition itself does not pretend to say when it was built; but conjecture says, in her usual random language, that it has been destroyed a thousand years. From the triumphs of time, we were conducted to those of genius. Rainham is the seat of Lord Townsend, of which it is said that it was designed by Inigo Jones. It is a handsome, commodious, well-furnished house; with a few very good pictures, but one of Belisarius, surpassingly excellent. We next came to Houghton

Hall. As we rode up to it, I could not but look with veneration, in spite of all the littleness of party and the feuds of faction, on this edifice, built by the man who gave to Europe, for twenty years, the blessing of uninterrupted peace.[1] I will give you a description of it to-morrow. But no—description is at an end: for I might as well attempt any other impossible thing, as to give you the faintest idea of this truly splendid and princely dwelling. The pictures form by far the finest private collection in this kingdom; they are valued at more than two hundred thousand pounds. Claudes, Titians, and Salvators, are to be seen in the most delightful profusion; and most of these pieces are in the very best manner of their respective masters. The mind is almost bewildered by the beauty and number of these exquisite works.

The next place worthy of observation is Holkham Hall, the residence of the present Mr. Coke, and built by the late Lord Leicester. It is entirely of white brick, and take it for inside and outside, state and commodiousness, beauty and elegance, I never saw any thing comparable to it. The pictures are many and charming; some exquisite Guidos, particularly St. Catharine, and a Cupid inexpressibly fine. There are many admirable statues, a number of antiques, and some of the finest drapery I ever saw. In the article of sculpture, however, it yields to Wilton, as much as it exceeds most other places. There is a hall of pink-veined marble, of immense

[1] Sir Robert Walpole.

size, superior to anything of the kind in this nation; round it is a colonade of pink and white marble fluted. There is at Houghton so exquisite a dining-room, with marble recesses, columns, and cisterns, and so luxurious, so cool, so charming, that I fancied myself at the villa of Pliny, or of Lucullus; and though I cannot bear oysters, yet I could have eaten some conchylia of the lake we saw out of the window; and I drank, in idea, a glass of Falernian, of twenty consulships, cooled by the elemental nymph. The next place deserving remark was Blickling; a very delightful seat, belonging to Lord Buckinghamshire. The situation is highly pleasing; more so to me than any I have seen in the east. You admire Houghton, but you wish for Blickling; you look at Houghton with astonishment, at Blickling with desire. There is there a *princely* library of wit and genius; forgive me for the epithet. I know it is a degrading one, but it popped out unawares. It is too much like what Voltaire said of the King of Prussia's poems, that they were *royal* verses. The park, wood, and water of this place, are superior to those of any of the neighbouring estates. But the charms of nature in this county are of the middling, calm, and pacific sort; she does not put forth her bolder, stronger, beauties. The striking, the grand, and the picturesque are here unknown. Brandon hill would be an alp in this country.

Between Aylsham and Norwich we went a little out of the road to see some famous mills. But the crane and the wheel are not quite so entertaining to me, as the instruments of Reynolds or Nollekens;

though it must be confessed they are more necessary to the comfort of society; for even *I* find that the sickle does more for my existence than the chisel.

1777.

We are just returned from spending a few days with Mrs. Cotton's father and mother: they live very genteelly, have a noble garden, a handsome coach, &c. Their other daughter was married to a man of very good fashion, and their niece to Lord Hume. She was down on a visit at Ormsby. Her Lord, in return for the large fortune she brought him, makes her a very fashionable, negligent husband. I saw her on Sunday, poor thing! She sighs, and is no countess at her heart. I have just received a present, from the author, of a new publication; it is a descriptive poem, called *Heath Hill*. How the bard could think it worth his while to look for me in this nook of creation, I cannot conceive. It seems to be very pretty. I have had a letter from Mrs. Barbauld, so full of elegance and good nature, with an invitation so frank and earnest, that I cannot leave the country without going to see her. I like my Brockdish cousins very well; she is a chatty, sensible woman, and he as deep in divinity as ever. I scarcely ever met with any person that had spent so much time, with so little detriment to his taste and manners, in controversial reading. It has left him very moderate aud very charitable. I am quite a nobody in debate *here*, though I made such a figure lately in explaining Arianism, Socinianism, and all the isms, to Mr. Garrick.

They rise here at five, and go to bed at nine; quite the thing for me you know; for my morning headaches, alas![1] preclude early rising: and while they have been asleep at night, I have gone through Dr. Maclaine's answer to Soame Jenyns. There is a good deal of wit and learning, and, I believe, truth and solidity, in some of his objections; others I think false and trivial, and his manner of stating them unfair. I do love Jenyns, but I do not contend for every part of his book: he is but a sucking child in christianity, and I am afraid has represented religion as a very uncomfortable thing. The deists will triumph at Maclaine's book, and exclaim, 'See how these Christians disagree!' Our cousins are very much concerned, and so am I, that their son is so fond of Bolingbroke and Hume. He is much too fashionable in his principles, though I believe very correct in his conduct. We frequently give each other, in our indirect warfare, broad hints about infidelity and *methodism*.

After service yesterday morning I was very

[1] In her early life as well as in her declining years, Hannah More was subject to successive illnesses, which threw great impediments in the way of her intellectual exertions. She used to say that her frequent attacks of illness were a great blessing to her, independently of the prime benefit of cheapening life and teaching patience; for they induced a habit of industry not natural to her, and taught her to make the most of her *well* days. She laughingly added, it had taught her also to contrive employment for her sick ones; that from habit she had learnt to suit her occupations to every gradation of the measure of capacity she possessed. 'I never (she said) afford a moment of a healthy day to transcribe, or put stops, or cross *t* s, or dot my *i* s. So that I find the lowest stage of my understanding may be turned to some account, and save better days for better things. I have learnt from it also to avoid procrastination, and that idleness which often attends unbroken health.'

CHAPTER III.

IN the beginning of June, 1776, Hannah More returned to Bristol after a six months' absence, four of which had been passed between the Adelphi and Hampton. It was remarked by her friends and family, that success and applause had made no change in her deportment. She brought back her native simplicity unsullied by the contact. The constitution of her mind was so opposed to affectation and art, that rank, literature, and fashion saw the bird escape as from the snare of the fowler, without losing a feather of its natural plumage, to soar at large in its own free element, and revisit its accustomed scenes.

We will here introduce two or three letters which passed about this time.

H. More to Mr. Garrick.

June 10, 1776.

I have devoured the newspapers for the last week with the appetite of a famished politician, to

learn if my general had yet laid down arms; but I find you go on with a true American spirit, destroying thousands of his Majesty's liege subjects, breaking the limbs of many, and the hearts of all. When I promised you I would not plague you with any of my nonsense till you were disengaged, could I possibly divine you would be so very good as to honour me with a letter?—aye, and a charming letter too, albeit a little one—it made me so proud and happy! But you are so used to make folks proud and happy that it is nothing to you; and what would be a violent effort to other people, slides naturally into your ordinary course of action.

I think, by the time this reaches you I may congratulate you on the end of your labours and the completion of your fame—a fame which has had no parallel, and will have no end. Yet whatever reputation the world may ascribe to you, I, who have had the happy privilege of knowing you intimately, shall always think you derived your greatest glory from the temperance with which you enjoyed it, and the true greatness of mind with which you lay it down. Surely, to have suppressed your talents in the moment of your highest capacity for exercising them, does as much honour to your heart as the exertion itself did to your dramatic character; but I cannot trust myself with this subject, because I am writing to the man himself; yet I ought to be indulged, for is not the recollection of my pleasures all that is left me of them? Have I not seen in one season that man

act seven-and-twenty-times, and rise each time in excellence, and shall I be silent? Have I not spent three months under the roof of that man and his dear charming lady, and received from them favours that would take me another three months to tell over, and shall I be silent?

But highly as I enjoy your glory, (for I do enjoy it most heartily, and seem to partake it too, as I think some rays of it fall on all your friends) yet I tremble for your health. It is impossible you can do so much mischief to the nerves of other people without hurting your own,—in Richard especially, where your murders are by no means confined to the Tower; but you assassinate all such of your audience as have hearts. I say, I tremble lest you should suffer for all this; but it is now over, as I hope are the bad effects of it upon yourself. You may break your wand at the end of your trial, when you lay down the office of haut intendant of the passions; but the enchantment it raised you can never break, while the memories and feelings remain of those who were ever admitted into the magic circle.

This letter is already of a good impudent length, and to the person, of all others, who has the least time to read nonsense. I will not prolong my impertinence but to beg and conjure that I may hear a little bit about your finishing night. The least scrap—printed or manuscript—paragraph or advertisement—merry or serious—verse or prose, will be thankfully received, and hung up in the temple of reliques.

Pray tell my sweet Mrs. Garrick I live on the hope of hearing from her. And tell her further that she and you have performed a miracle, for you have loaded one person with obligations, and have not made an ingrate.

Viva V. M. mille annos.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

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Mr. Garrick to Hannah More.

MY DEAR MADAM,

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and if not now, I will most certainly scribble something for the next time. Should I be drowned, I hope you will excuse me, and write my epitaph.

With my best and warmest wishes to you, your sisters, and the whole blood of the Stonehouses,

I am, most sincerely,

Your friend and humble servant,

D. GARRICK.

P. S. I write upon a full gallop; the provisions are on board—my wife calls, (who begs her compliments) and that is a voice I always obey.

H. More to David Garrick.

Bungay, June 16, 1777.

I beg to return you my hearty thanks for your goodness in sending me your delightful prologue. That you should think me not unworthy to possess so great a treasure, flatters more than my vanity. And that you should send it to me so soon makes it doubly gratifying.

I have read and re-read it with all the malice of a friend, and pronounce that I never read a sweeter or more beautiful thing. The first stanza is strikingly descriptive; the second, elegantly pathetic; the image of the sun and shower very fine; and the third is highly poetical. The truth of the allusion is not once violated throughout, but is maintained with great spirit and exactness—the two extreme, and most difficult points to attain, I apprehend, in fable-writing. There is great ease too, in your versification, without the flimsiness

which too often attends irregular numbers. I have written my sincere sentiments with the same frankness I should have done had they been less in favour of the poet. I speak with the more confidence of this composition, as I have now an opportunity, by reading it myself, of forming a fairer judgment than I could have done from your reciting it.

We have at this place the 'tragedians of the city' of Norwich, who sojourn here a month once in two years, in their progress through the two counties. The dramatic furor rages terribly among the people—the more so, I suppose, from being allowed to vent itself so seldom. Every body goes to the play every night—that is, every other night, which is as often as they perform. Visiting, drinking, and even card-playing, is for this happy month suspended; nay, I question, if, like Lent, it does not stop the celebration of weddings, for I do not believe there is a damsel in the town who would spare the time to be married during this rarely-occurring scene of festivity.

It must be confessed, however, the good folks have no bad taste; for you are the favourite bard of Bungay: to prove that this is truth, I must tell you that I have already been to 'The Maid of Oaks' and 'The Clandestine Marriage;' and among this week's amusements, already given out, are 'Cymon,' 'Bon Ton' and 'Little Gipsey.' A certain Mr. Ibbott played Mr. Heidelburgh more than tolerably, and a pretty-looking Mrs. Simpson was very pleasing in Fanny. Griffiths, the Norwich manager, did Lord

Ogilby, but was rather languid than elegant, and mistook a feebleness of exertion for refinement of breeding; yet in my poor judgment he rather did it deficiently than falsely. I think the part of Henry was pretty well conceived, though inadequately acted, by one Dancer. It was received with great applause. I find I have been sadly mauled in some of the daily papers. I cannot get to see them. I did not think I was of consequence enough: they tell me it is Kenrick.

I hear Baretti has been civil enough to send me one of his books on Shakspeare, but I have it not here; it is a strange undertaking; slippery ground, I think; an Italian author, to write about our divine English dramatist, and that in the French language!

The day before I came to town I received a present from De Lolme of his new book; I have only dipped into it. The truth is, I am half afraid to read it, for it was accompanied with a very sprightly agreeable letter, apologizing for some queer things in it, which he expects I shall censure very much, or, at least, look very grave at. I suppose, however, it may be safely read by a good Protestant; it being, I suspect, a satire on the foolish austerities of the church of Rome; something in Stillingfleet's way.

Many thanks, dear sir, for your good and wholesome advice about my play. I do nothing, except regret my own idleness. I tremble for my fifth act; but I am afraid I shall never make others tremble at it.

My love and duty to my sweet Mrs. Garrick,

and my thankful compliments to the young lady, to whose transcription I am so much obliged; she is astonishingly correct,—not the smallest error. Pardon this nonsense, dear Sir, in

Your obliged and obedient,

H. More.

From Hannah More to her Sister.

Hampton, 1777.

As soon as I got to London, I drove straight to the Adelphi, where to my astonishment I found a coach waiting for me to carry me to Hampton.

Upon my arrival here I was immediately put in possession of my old chamber. Garrick is all good humour, vivacity and wit. While I think of it, I must treat you with a little distich which Mrs. Barbauld wrote extempore, on my showing my Felix Buckles (the elegant buckles which Garrick wore the last time he ever acted, and with which he presented me as a relic.)

'Thy buckles, O Garrick, thy friend may now use,
But no mortal hereafter shall tread in thy shoes.'

Last Wednesday we went to town for a night, when Dr. Burney sat an hour or two with us. We have had a great deal of company here, lords, ladies, wits, critics, and poets. Last Saturday we had a very agreeable day. Our party consisted of about twelve; for these dear people understand society too well ever to have very large parties. The Norfolk Wyndham, Sheridan, and Lord Pal-

politely accosted by every well-dressed person in the congregation, all desiring to see me at their houses. The invitations were so warm and numerous that I was quite at a loss what to do. Amongst these kind people was an elderly gentleman, who says he is the oldest friend my father has in the world: a friendship of seventy years is something like; he was delighted to see me. I find Mr. Cotton was one of eight gentlemen who were spirited enough to subscribe money towards building a house for their worthy minister. I have long ago found out that hardly any but plain frugal people ever do generous things. Our cousin, Mr. Cotton, who I dare say is often ridiculed for his simplicity and frugality, could yet lay down two hundred pounds without being sure of ever receiving a shilling interest, for the laudable purpose of establishing a man of merit, to whom he is still a very considerable contributor. This is commonly the case; and I am apt to conceive a prejudice against everybody who makes a great figure, and to suspect those who *talk* generously.

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Your friend and humble servant,

D. GARRICK.

P. S. I write upon a full gallop; the provisions are on board—my wife calls, (who begs her compliments) and that is a voice I always obey.

H. More to David Garrick.

Bungay, June 16, 1777.

I beg to return you my hearty thanks for your goodness in sending me your delightful prologue. That you should think me not unworthy to possess so great a treasure, flatters more than my vanity. And that you should send it to me so soon makes it doubly gratifying.

I have read and re-read it with all the malice of a friend, and pronounce that I never read a sweeter or more beautiful thing. The first stanza is strikingly descriptive; the second, elegantly pathetic; the image of the sun and shower very fine; and the third is highly poetical. The truth of the allusion is not once violated throughout, but is maintained with great spirit and exactness—the two extreme, and most difficult points to attain, I apprehend, in fable-writing. There is great ease too, in your versification, without the flimsiness

which too often attends irregular numbers. I have written my sincere sentiments with the same frankness I should have done had they been less in favour of the poet. I speak with the more confidence of this composition, as I have now an opportunity, by reading it myself, of forming a fairer judgment than I could have done from your reciting it.

We have at this place the 'tragedians of the city' of Norwich, who sojourn here a month once in two years, in their progress through the two counties. The dramatic furor rages terribly among the people—the more so, I suppose, from being allowed to vent itself so seldom. Every body goes to the play every night—that is, every other night, which is as often as they perform. Visiting, drinking, and even card-playing, is for this happy month suspended; nay, I question, if, like Lent, it does not stop the celebration of weddings, for I do not believe there is a damsel in the town who would spare the time to be married during this rarely-occurring scene of festivity.

It must be confessed, however, the good folks have no bad taste; for you are the favourite bard of Bungay: to prove that this is truth, I must tell you that I have already been to 'The Maid of Oaks' and 'The Clandestine Marriage;' and among this week's amusements, already given out, are 'Cymon,' 'Bon Ton' and 'Little Gipsey.' A certain Mr. Ibbott played Mr. Heidelburgh more than tolerably, and a pretty-looking Mrs. Simpson was very pleasing in Fanny. Griffiths, the Norwich manager, did Lord

Ogilby, but was rather languid than elegant, and mistook a feebleness of exertion for refinement of breeding; yet in my poor judgment he rather did it deficiently than falsely. I think the part of Henry was pretty well conceived, though inadequately acted, by one Dancer. It was received with great applause. I find I have been sadly mauled in some of the daily papers. I cannot get to see them. I did not think I was of consequence enough: they tell me it is Kenrick.

I hear Baretti has been civil enough to send me one of his books on Shakspeare, but I have it not here; it is a strange undertaking; slippery ground, I think; an Italian author, to write about our divine English dramatist, and that in the French language!

The day before I came to town I received a present from De Lolme of his new book; I have only dipped into it. The truth is, I am half afraid to read it, for it was accompanied with a very sprightly agreeable letter, apologizing for some queer things in it, which he expects I shall censure very much, or, at least, look very grave at. I suppose, however, it may be safely read by a good Protestant; it being, I suspect, a satire on the foolish austerities of the church of Rome; something in Stillingfleet's way.

Many thanks, dear sir, for your good and wholesome advice about my play. I do nothing, except regret my own idleness. I tremble for my fifth act; but I am afraid I shall never make others tremble at it.

My love and duty to my sweet Mrs. Garrick,

and my thankful compliments to the young lady, to whose transcription I am so much obliged; she is astonishingly correct,—not the smallest error. Pardon this nonsense, dear Sir, in

Your obliged and obedient,

H. More.

From Hannah More to her Sister.

Hampton, 1777.

As soon as I got to London, I drove straight to the Adelphi, where to my astonishment I found a coach waiting for me to carry me to Hampton.

Upon my arrival here I was immediately put in possession of my old chamber. Garrick is all good humour, vivacity and wit. While I think of it, I must treat you with a little distich which Mrs. Barbauld wrote extempore, on my showing my Felix Buckles (the elegant buckles which Garrick wore the last time he ever acted, and with which he presented me as a relic.)

'Thy buckles, O Garrick, thy friend may now use,
But no mortal hereafter shall tread in thy shoes.'

Last Wednesday we went to town for a night, when Dr. Burney sat an hour or two with us. We have had a great deal of company here, lords, ladies, wits, critics, and poets. Last Saturday we had a very agreeable day. Our party consisted of about twelve; for these dear people understand society too well ever to have very large parties. The Norfolk Wyndham, Sheridan, and Lord Pal-

merston said the most lively things. But Roscius surpassed himself, and literally kept the table in a roar for four hours. He told his famous story of 'Jack Pocklington' in a manner so entirely new, and so infinitely witty, that the company have done nothing but talk of it ever since. I have often heard of this story: it is of a person who came to offer himself for the stage, with an impediment in his speech. He gives the character, too, in as strong a manner as Fielding could have done.

After supper, on Sunday, Garrick read to us, out of Paradise Lost, that fine part on diseases and old age. Dr. Cadogan and his agreeable daughter have spent a day and a night here. The Doctor gave me some lectures on anatomy, and assures me that I am now as well acquainted with secretion, concoction, digestion, and assimilation, as many a wise-looking man in a great wig. We go, on Friday. into Hampshire, to Mr. Wilmot's. Lord and Lady Bathurst are to be of the party. I should be apt to suspect that the presence of a lord-chancellor was not very likely to contribute to mirth; but I don't think all the great officers of state put together could have gravity enough to damp the fire of Garrick, or blunt the edge of his wit. As soon as we return from Farnborough Place, I shall quit the rosy bowers of Hampton, and conclude my very long and pleasant campaign.

From the same to the same.

Farnborough Place, 1777.

We reached this place yesterday morning. You will judge of the size of the house, when I tell you there are eleven visitors, and all perfectly well accommodated. The Wilmots live in the greatest magnificence; but what is a much better thing, they live also rationally and sensibly. On Sunday evening, however, I was a little alarmed; they were preparing for music (sacred music was the *ostensible* thing), but before I had time to feel uneasy, Garrick turned round, and said, 'Nine,[1] you are a *Sunday woman;* retire to your room—I will recal you when the music is over.'

The *great seal* disappointed us, but we have Lady Bathurst, Lady Catharine Apsley, Dr. Kennicott, the Hebrew professor of Oxford, his wife, a very agreeable woman (though she copies Hebrew),[2] besides the Garricks and two or three other very clever people. We live with the utmost freedom and ease imaginable, walking all together, or in small parties, chatting, reading, or scribbling, just as we like. We are now come to town on business. I shall set out for Bristol on Friday.

At this visit to Mr. Wilmot, a friendship commenced between Hannah More and every indi-

[1] An appellation he generally gave her.

[2] It should be here mentioned to her honour, that she took the trouble of acquiring this language for the entire purpose of qualifying herself for correcting the press of her husband's great work.

vidual of the party, which lasted during their respective lives. She returned to Bristol in August, 1777, after an absence of five months, and about this time received the following letters from Mr. Garrick.

Mr. Garrick to Miss H. More.

MY DEAR NINE,

We have been upon the ramble for near three weeks, and your ode did not reach me till Monday last. Good, and very good—partial, and very partial. Mrs. Garrick (who sends her best wishes) and her lord and master, set out for Bath the beginning of next month. Though my doctors have extorted a vow from me, that I shall neither dine out nor give dinners, while I stay at Bath; yet I had a mental reservation with regard to Bristol. However, if I continue sick and peevish, I had better keep my ill humours at home, and for my wife alone. She is bound to them, and so reconciled to them by long use, that she can go to sleep in the midst of a good scolding, as a good sailor can while the guns are firing.

Mrs. Garrick is studying your two acts. We shall bring them with us, and she will criticise you to the bone. A German commentator (Montaigne says) will suck an author dry. She is resolved to dry you up to a slender shape, and has all her wits at work upon you.

I am really tired—my thumb is guilty, but my heart is free. I could write till midnight, but if I

don't finish directly, I shall be obliged, from pain, to stop short at what I have more pleasure in declaring, that I am, please your Nineship,

Most truly your's,

D. GARRICK.

Have you kindly excused me to Dr. Stonehouse? My friend Walker intends trying his lecturing acumen upon you very soon. Why should not I come one day, and kill two birds with one stone.

From the same to the same.

Broadlands, 1777.

MY DEAR NINE,

I have been half-dead, and thought I should never have seen you more. I took care of your property, and have shown my love to you by a trifling legacy —but that is at present deferred; and if our friendship is like that of some other persons, we may, in a little time, smile, and shake hands, and backbite each other as genteelly as the best of them. *Sat sapienti.*

I am at the sweet seat of Lord Palmerston, called *Broadlands*, near Romsey in Hampshire, and again growing fat, and overflowing with spirits. I was really so ill that I could not write a letter but with pain. I am not suffered to write or read; therefore I am now pleasing myself by stealth.

Your friend, the Dean of Gloucester, has most kindly sent me his book against Locke and his followers. I have read it with care, and like it, some few trifling matters excepted, but I cannot be con-

ceited enough to make my objections in the margin of his book. What shall I do? You are, I suppose, in the same predicament.

If you will read the last Monthly Review, you will see an article upon the *Wreath of Fashion*, which has been much approved; and, what is more surprising, has revived the sale of the poem very briskly. A word in your ear—but be secret for your life—I wrote it.

From same to same.

Inclosed you have the 'Blackbird and Nightingale.' I am afraid it will not please you so much upon paper as from my tongue. I must desire you to mark what is amiss in it, and speak freely to me as to your thinking, about its errors. Baretti has printed a volume in octavo against Voltaire, and hath, I believe, sent it to me: for I found a copy upon my table. If it is done well, I shall rejoice; if ill, the cause will be much hurt by a weak defender.

I hope you will consider your dramatic matter with all your wit and feeling. Let your fifth act be worthy of you, and tear the heart to pieces, or woe betide you. I shall not pass over any scenes, or parts of scenes, that are merely written to make up a certain number of lines. Such doings, Madam Nine, will neither do for you nor for me,

Most affectionately yours,

Upon the gallop,

D. GARRICK.

My wife sends her love.

From same to same.

Essex, July 9, 1777.

MY DEAREST OF HANNAHS,

You must have thought me lost, mad, or dead, that I have not sent you a morsel of affection for some time. I have an excuse, if there can be any for the neglect of such a friend! We are now with Mr. Rigby[1] and some ladies, our particular friends, by the sea-side; and while I am writing this in my dressing-room, I see no less than fifty vessels under sail, and one, half an hour ago, saluted us with thirteen guns. Among all the news, foreign and domestic, that travel through and about Bristol, have you not yet heard that *Mrs. Garrick and I were separated?* Tell the truth, dear Nine, and shame you know whom. To our very great surprise a great friend of ours came from London; and to his greater surprise, found us laughing over our tea under our walnut-tree: he took me aside, and told me it was all over the town, from Hyde Park Corner to Whitechapel dunghill, that I had parted with Mrs. Garrick. You may easily suppose this was great matter of mirth to us. We imagined somebody had had a mind to joke with our friend, but upon inquiry we found that such a report had been spread; but to comfort your heart, be assured that we are still as much united as ever, and are both so well, that there is a prospect of dragging on our clogs for some years to come. Colman is preparing his

[1] The Right Honourable Richard Rigby.

comedy, of four acts, called the '*Suicide*,' a very dangerous subject, but the actors say it must have great success.

My theatrical curiosity diminishes daily, and my vanity, as an author, is quite extinct; though, by the bye, I have written a copy of verses to Mr. Baldwin, the member for Shropshire, upon his attack upon me in the House of Commons. He complained that a celebrated gentleman was admitted into the house when everybody else was excluded, and *that I gloried in my situation*. Upon these last words my muse has taken flight, and with success. I have described the different speakers, and it is said well, and strongly, and true. I read them to Lord North, Lord Gower, Lord Weymouth, Mr. Rigby, &c. and they were all pleased. If I have time before I am obliged to send away this long letter, you shall have the first copy, though you must take care not to suffer them to go from your own hands. I have upon my word, given them to nobody. Burke and Mr. Townsend behaved nobly upon the occasion. The whole house groaned at poor Baldwin, who is reckoned, *par excellence*, the dullest man in it; and a question was nearly going to be put, to give me an exclusive privilege to go in whenever I pleased. In short, I am a much greater man than I thought.

Whenever I receive your story, I shall con it over most unmercifully. My wife this moment tells me that I must send you a double portion of her love; and she has added, that, if the vinegar is but half as sharp as your pen, or as your temper

is sweet, she shall be most thankful for it; There is German wit for you. I shall deliver the overflowings of your heart to her in all the purity of affection. We are going to Lady Spencer's, for ten days, in half an hour. Our loves to all about you.

Most affectionately and
faithfully yours,
D. GARRICK.

From same to same.

Adelphi, Oct. 17, 1777.

Shame! shame! shame!

You may well say so, my dear madam; but indeed I have been so disagreeably entertained with the gout running all about me, from head to heel, that I have been unfit for the duties of friendship; and very often for those which a good husband, and a good friend, should never fail performing. I must gallop over this small piece of paper; it was the first I snatched up, to tell you that my wife has your letter, and thinks it a fine one and a sweet one.

I was at court to-day, and such work they made with me, from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Page of the Back Stairs, that I have been suffocated with compliments. We have wanted you at some of our private hours. Where's the Nine? we want the Nine! Silent was every muse.

Cambridge said yesterday, in a large company at the Bishop of Durham's, where I dined, that your ode to my house-dog was a very witty production; and he thought there was nothing to be

altered or amended except in the last stanza, which he thought the only weak one. I am afraid that you asked me to do something for you about the parliament, which, in my multitude of matters, was overlooked; pray, if it is of consequence, let me know it again, and you may be assured of the intelligence you want,

The last new tragedy, '*Semiramis*,' has, though a bare translation, met with great success. The prologue is a bad one, as you may read in the papers, by the author: the epilogue is grave, but a sweet pretty elegant morsel, by Mr. Sheridan; it had deservedly great success. Mr. Mason's Caractacus is not crowded, but the men of taste, and classical men, admire it much. Mrs. Garrick sends a large parcel of love to you all. I send mine in the same bundle. Pray write soon, and forgive me all my delinquencies. I really have not time to read over my scrawl, so pray decipher it, and excuse me,

Ever yours, most affectionately

D. GARRICK.

CHAPTER IV.

We find Hannah More again in London in the November of the same year, 1777. Her tragedy of Percy had been accepted by Mr. Harris of Covent Garden, and was to be brought out without delay.

On her arrival in town, she thus writes to her sister, from her lodgings in Gerrard Street.

1777.

I believe I shall go to Hampton to-morrow to stay two or three days. They insist upon it, and I think it will be of service to me, if it be only to keep me quiet for a few days. Mrs. Garrick says I shall have my own comfortable room, with a good fire, and 'with all the lozenges and all the wheys in the world.' You may be sure this was her own expression. Mr. Garrick was at the Chancellor's this morning. It is impossible to shew more friendly anxiety than both *he* and Lady Bathurst do for the success of Percy. The play seldom comes into my head unless it be mentioned. I am at present very tranquil about it. The town is rather empty, but who's afraid?

Gerrard Street, 1777.

It is impossible to tell you of all the kindness and friendship of the Garricks; he thinks of nothing, talks of nothing, writes of nothing but Percy. He is too sanguine; it will have a fall, and so I tell him. When Garrick had finished his prologue and epilogue, (which are excellent) he desired I would pay him. Dryden, he said, used to have five guineas a piece, but as he was a richer man he would be content if I would treat him with a handsome supper and a bottle of claret. We haggled sadly about the price, I insisting that I could only afford to give him a beef steak and a pot of porter; and at about twelve we sat down to some toast and honey, with which the temperate bard contented himself. Several very great ones made interest to hear Garrick read the play, which he peremptorily refused. I supped on Wednesday night at Sir Joshua's: spent yesterday morning at the Chancellor's, and the evening at Mrs. Boscawen's, lady Bathurst being of the party.

What dreadful news from America! we are a disgraced, undone nation. What a sad time to bring out a play in! when, if the country had the least spark of virtue remaining, not a creature would think of going to it. But the levity of the times will, on this occasion, be of some service to me.

Mr. Garrick's study, Adelphi, ten at night.

He himself puts the pen into my hand, and bids me say that all is just as it should be. Nothing was ever more warmly received. I went with Mr. and Mrs. Garrick; sat in Mr. Harris's box, in a snug dark corner, and behaved very well, that is, very quietly. The prologue and epilogue were received with bursts of applause; so indeed was the whole; as much beyond my expectation as my deserts! Mr. Garrick's kindness has been unceasing.

Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

DEAR MADAM,

No one can more sincerely rejoice in the triumph of last night than myself, unless some friend, equally affectionate, was of a disposition so timid as to doubt of your success, which I never did for one moment. I thought the divine muses would be more than a match for the infernal powers, and though Cerberus showed a disposition to bark, and the Hydra to hiss, the one would only prove himself an ill-natured cur, the other a silly goose—their clamours were all drowned in the universal plaudit.

I have had such a pain in my face as has obliged me to be muffled up for these six weeks, but I am getting better, and have sent to the box-keeper for boxes for your third and sixth night, and hope also to attend the ninth, though I dare not make so distant an engagement with precarious health.

In any situation I could not flatter myself with being of use as a critic; you had Mr. Garrick, who feels so truly, as renders criticism needless, and who has also the critical art in such perfection, that he would be the best judge if he had no feeling.

I have only to wish you health to wear your bays with pleasure, and that you may ever be as you have been, the pride of your friends and the humiliation of your enemies. With great esteem

I am, dear Madam,

Your most affectionate and
obliged humble servant,
ELIZABETH MONTAGU.

H. More to her sister

Gerrard Street, 1777.

I may now venture to tell you, (as you extorted a promise from me to conceal nothing) what I would not hazard last night,—that the reception of Percy exceeds my most sanguine wishes. I am just returned from the second night, and it was, if possible, received more favourably than on the first. One tear is worth a thousand hands, and I had the satisfaction to see even the men shed them in abundance.

The critics, (as is usual) met at the Bedford last night, to fix the character of the play. If I were a heroine of romance, and was writing to my confidante, I should tell you all the fine things that were said, but as I am a real living Christian woman, I do not think it would be so modest;

I will only say, as Garrick does, that I have had so much flattery, that I might, if I would, choke myself in my own pap.

Northumberland House, Dec. 29, 1777.

Dr. Percy[1] waits on Mrs. More with his best thanks for her most invaluable present of 'Percy' corrected, &c. with her own hand, which he shall ever highly value, and keep as a pledge of friendship. He should not have delayed returning his sincere acknowledgments so long, but he has been for many days past, wholly engaged in regulating and dispensing the duke's annual charity to many hundreds of poor.

Gerrard Street, 1777.

Yesterday morning Dr. Percy was announced to me. When he came in he told me he was sent by the Duke of Northumberland and Earl Percy to congratulate me on my great success; to inform me of the general approbation, and to thank me in their names for the honour I had done them. That the duke and my lord were under much concern at not being able to attend the play; both father and son having the gout. They sent, however, each for a ticket, for which they paid as became the blood of the Percys; and in so genteel and respectful a manner, that it was impossible for the nicest pride to take umbrage at it.

I am more flattered with the honour this noble

[1] Bishop of Dromore.

family have done me, because I did not solicit their attention, nor would I even renew my acquaintance with Dr. Percy on coming to town, lest it should look like courting the notice of his patrons. *Je suis un peu fière.*

They are playing *Percy* at this moment for the seventh time: I never think of going. It is very odd, but it does not amuse me. I had a very brilliant house last night. It is strange, but I hear Lord Lyttleton[1] has been every night since the play came out. I do not deserve it, for I always abuse him. I have the great good fortune to have the whole town warm in my favour, and the writers too, except ——— and ———; these two are very ill of the yellow jaundice—weak men to be disturbed at so feeble an enemy! Rival I am not to either of them, or to any body else: for the idea of competition never entered my head. But these two, looking on themselves as the greatest tragic writers of the age, consider me as the usurper of their rights. Hoole and Mason are much more generous: the reason, I suppose, is, they are better poets. The Duke of Northumberland has sent to thank me for a copy of the play. My Lord bid Dr. Percy tell me it was impossible to express how exactly I had pleased him in the manner of wording the inscription.

Last night was the ninth night of Percy. It was

[1] Son of the first Lord Lyttleton.

a very brilliant house; and *I* was there. Lady North did me the honour to take a stage box. I trembled when the speech against the wickedness of going to war was spoken, as I was afraid my lord was in the house, and that speech, though not written with any particular design, is so bold, and always so warmly received, that it frightens me; and I really feel uneasy till it is well over. Mrs. Montagu had a box again; which, as she is so consummate a critic, and is hardly ever seen at a public place, is a great credit to the play. Lady B. was there of course; and I am told she has not made an engagement this fortnight, but on condition she should be at liberty to break it for Percy. I was asked to dine at the chancellor's two or three days ago, but happened to be engaged to Mrs. Montagu, with whom I have been a good deal lately. We also spent an agreeable evening together at Dr. Cadogan's, where she and I, being the only two monsters in the creation who never touch a card, (and laughed at it enough for it we are) had the fireside to ourselves; and a more elegant and instructive conversation I have seldom enjoyed. I met Mrs. Chapone one day at Mrs. Montagu's; she is one of Percy's warmest admirers; and as she does not go to plays, but has formed her judgment in the closet, it is the more flattering. I have been out very little except to particular friends. I believe it was a false delicacy, but I could not go to any body's house, for fear they should think I came to be praised or to hear the play talked of.

Gerrard Street, 1777.

I am at this moment as quiet as my heart can wish, and quietness is my definition of happiness. I had no less than five invitations to dine abroad to day, but preferred the precious and rare luxury of solitude. I was much diverted at the play the other night, when Douglas tears the letter which he had intercepted, an honest man in the shilling gallery, vexed it had fallen into the husband's hands instead of the lover's, called out—'Do pray send the letter to Mr. Percy.' I think some of you might contrive to make a little jaunt, if it were only for one night, and see the *bantling*. Adieu, and some of you come.

The sisters complied with this invitation, and here follows an extract from one of their letters.

January, 1778.

Just returned from Percy, the theatre overflowed prodigiously, notwithstanding their Majesties and the School for Scandal at the other house. Yes: we did overflow, the twelfth night! On entering the parlour, where Hannah was sitting alone, our eyes were greeted with the sight of a wreath, composed of a Roman laurel, ingeniously interwoven, and the stems confined within an elegant ring. From whence you will ask could such a fanciful thought proceed? I answer—from Mrs. Boscawen. It originated at Glanvilla, where the wreath was made. The letter which accompanied it was an elegant morceau.

I enclose our sister's *poetical* acknowledgment of this piece of gallanterie.

TO THE HONOURABLE MRS. BOSCAWEN.

The laurel, fostered by your hand,
With *me* will never grow;
The beauteous wreath your fingers twined,
Would wither on *my* brow.

Apollo, who his Daphne seeks
Transformed to this fair tree,
Would frown to see his darling plant
Thus ornamenting *me*.

But when I told the angry power
You placed it on my brow,
'Yes; 'tis my darling plant (he cried)
Full well I know it now.

'But give it back, presumptuous maid,
Restore my fav'rite tree,
Let her who gave it thee receive
This precious boon from me.

'Tell her to guard my sacred plant
From every chilly blast,
To crown her heroes yet to come,
To crown her heroes past.

'Nor let her fear, to those she loves,
To give this boon away?
For her the faithful *myrtle* blooms,
For her the sage's bay.

'And even thou shalt claim a name,
And challenge some renown;
Boscawen's friendship is thy fame,
Her praise, thy LAUREL CROWN.'

Friday a card from Lady —— to engage Hannah to dine with her on Sunday, which she, being of the

Christian faction, declined. Yesterday, when we were all seated in the drawing-room in the Adelphi, a gentleman was announced by the name of Home, (author of the Tragedy of Douglas.) Mr. Garrick took Hannah by the hand, and approaching the stranger, said, he begged leave to introduce the *Percy* to the *Douglas;* upon which Mr. Home expressed his desire that the alliance might be again renewed; and all the company with pleasure took notice, it was the Douglas that first sued to the Percy.

Mrs. Garrick tells us that when they were at Althorp, Mr. Garrick read Percy to all the party at Lord Spencer's. Though the first edition of the play was near four thousand, and it has only been printed a fortnight, Cadell yesterday sent for a corrected copy, in order to forward the second edition as fast as possible.

Hannah resumes the correspondence.

1778.

Yesterday I dined at Sir Joshua's. Just as they were beginning to offer their nightly sacrifice to their idol Loo, I took it into my head to go and see Mrs. Barry in the mad scene in the last act of Percy, in which she is so very fine, that though it is my own nonsense, I always see that scene with pleasure. I called on a lady, not choosing to go alone, and we got into the front boxes. On opening the door I was a little hurt to see a very indifferent house. I looked on the stage, and saw the scene was the

inside of a prison, and that the heroine, who was then speaking, had on a linen gown. I was quite stunned, and really thought I had lost my senses, when a smart man in regimentals, began to sing, 'How happy could I be with either.' I stared and rubbed my eyes, thinking I was in a dream; for all this while I was such a dunce, that I never discovered that they were acting the 'Beggar's Opera.' At length, upon inquiry, I found that Lewis had been taken extremely ill, and that hand-bills had been distributed to announce another play. Many sober personages shook their heads at me, as much as to say—How finely we are caught. Among these were Mr. D.——, the Prebendary, who came under the same mistake: in another box was Dr. Percy, who, I vainly thought, looked rather glum. But the best of all was Sir William Ashurst, who sat in a side box, and was perhaps one of the first judges who ever figured away at the 'Beggars' Opera,' that strong and bitter satire against the professions, and particularly his.

Monday night, 1778.

At the latter part of this evening Mr. Home came in; I was quite hurt to see him. He is a worthy gentlemanlike man. He congratulated me on my success, and said Alfred[1] had not hurt me much. There was no replying to this: so I said nothing: condolence would have been insult. Tuesday I dined at Mr. Wilmot's, with an agreeable

[1] This tragedy was brought out before Percy, and lived only four nights.

party. When I came home I found an invitation to dine the following day at Sir Joshua's, and in the Adelphi. I could accept of neither, being pre-engaged to dine with Mrs. Delany. Our party, like our dinner, was small, excellent, and well chosen. It consisted only of Mrs. Delany, Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Chapone, and one very agreeable man. The Duchess of Portland, and all Mrs. Delany's chosen friends were appointed for the evening. I dined yesterday at Garrick's, with the sour crout[1] party. Lady Bathurst came to see me yesterday before I was up: 'tis well I was ill, or I should have had a fine trimming, for she makes breakfast for the chancellor every day before nine, during the whole winter. She is very angry that I go to see her so seldom. I am not sorry that if I do affront my friends, it is generally in this way; but I always think people will like me the less the more they see of me.

Mrs. Garrick came to me this morning, and wished me to go to the Adelphi, which I declined, being so ill. She would have gone herself to fetch me a physician, and insisted upon sending me my dinner, which I refused: but at six this evening, when Garrick came to the Turk's head to dine, there accompanied him, in the coach, a minced chicken in a stew-pan, hot, a canister of her fine tea, and a pot of cream. Were there ever such people! Tell it not in Epic, or in Lyric, that the

[1] This was a meeting of learned men once a week, at a dinner in which sour crout always made a dish; and to this dinner Hannah More was always invited.

great Roscius rode with a stew-pan of minced meat with him in the coach for my dinner. Percy is acted again this evening: do any of you choose to go? I can write you an order; for my own part, I shall enjoy a much superior pleasure—that of sitting by the fire, in a great chair, and being denied to all company; what is Percy to this?

Well, if you do not desire I should write you an order, I will write something that will give some pleasure to your sisterly vanity. A friend has just sent me a letter she received from Mrs. Clive, from which here follows an extract. 'I suppose you have heard of the uncommon success Miss More's play has met with, indeed, very deservedly. I have not seen it, but have read it: it is delightful, natural, and affecting, and by much the best modern tragedy that has been acted in my time, which you know is a pretty while ago. As you are acquainted with her family, I know you will be pleased with her success. Mr. Garrick had the conducting it, and you know whatever he touches turns to gold.'

My friends have been so excessively kind to me in my little illness, that it was worth suffering some pain, (though perhaps not quite so much) to try them. The Garricks have been to see me every morning. The other day he told me he was in a violent hurry—that he had been to order his own and Mrs. Garrick's mourning—had just settled every thing with the undertaker, and called for a moment to take a few hints for my epitaph. I told him he was too late, as I had disposed of the em-

ployment, a few days before, to Dr. Johnson: but as I thought *he* (Garrick) would praise me most, I should be glad to change; as to hints, I told him I had only one to give; which was to romance as much as he could, and make the character as fine as possible.

H. More to her Sister.

London, 1778.

To-morrow I go to Hampton, I dread catching cold, as I have not ventured down stairs; the doctor violently opposes my going, as he has the most exalted opinion of my indiscretion. Mrs. Garrick and he battled an hour about the propriety of it. As he found we were both secretly resolved, he made a virtue of necessity, and gave the leave we were determined to take. He told us he expected I should be brought back half-dead with feasting, and indolence, and luxury, and imprudence; but at last he consented on condition that I should be well furred and flannelled, live maigre, and drink no wine.

We have been here a week, Mrs. Sheridan is with us, and her husband comes down on evenings. I find I have mistaken this lady; she is unaffected and sensible; converses and reads extremely well, and writes prettily. To be sure there may be wiser parties in the world than ours, but I question if there is one more cheerful. Ought one to own it, that the great English Roscius, and the best English dramatic poet, (to say nothing of the ladies,

who set up for something too)—that these great genuises, I say, sit up till midnight, playing at cross-purposes, crooked answers, and what's my thought like? yet it is true you never heard a set of wits utter half so much nonsense!

I dined to-day in the Adelphi; we were very comfortable. Garrick read a good deal, and would insist upon my reading a poem, which I told him I would not do to prevent a French war. Saturday Lady Juliana Penn spent the afternoon with me: I like her much; she bears her misfortunes, (the loss of the government of a vast province, and twenty thousand a year) with the constancy of a great mind.

I was last night in some fine company. One lady asked what was the newest colour; the other answered that the most truly fashionable silk was a soupçon de vert, lined with a *soupir etouffeé et bradée de l'esperance;* now you must not consult your old-fashioned dictionary for the word *espérance*, for you will there find that it means nothing but hope, whereas espérance in the new language of the times means rose-buds. I dined the other day at Mrs. Leveson's, and spent the afternoon at Mrs. Boscawen's with the Duchess of Beaufort.

As you love to see all my nonsense, I enclose a few lines I sent to Mrs. Boscawen the other day, with a little bottle of otto of roses.

Too gross are my senses, too vulgar my nose is,
For perfume of jasmine or essence of roses;
To you 'tis more suited, whose organs I find,
Partake the refinement that graces your mind.

Had the phial, dear Madam, I now send to you,
Been the phial which held the Diable Boiteux,
The spirit in prison no more would complain,
Nor solicit the scholar to free him again.

When laid on your toilet, and kept in your sight,
How mortals would envy the fate of the sprite,
Not a soul but would wish of his place to make trial,
And each beau would be cramming himself in a phial.

And why not in this? for deep chymists, 'tis said,
Can draw forth a spirit from feathers or lead—
Nay from butterflies too; and how do we know,
But this essence of scents is a liquified beau?

From Mrs. Boscawen to Mrs. More.

January 1, 1778.

I send you, dear Madam, the enclosed from Mr. Berenger to me.

'I return you the tragedy of Percy with as many thanks as I can give for the pleasure of being permitted to read it. I must not talk like a French critic or a reviewer, of plot, sentiment, language, character, and all that Bayes talks about, but I will call it a meritorious and capital performance, in which there is none of the *feather*, but all the *point* and *force* of the pen. When you see the fair author, crown her, cover her, hide her with laurels: and when I see her I will scatter flowers before her.

Adieu, my dear Madam, adieu,

R. BERENGER.

I suppose Madam More will round off another

wonder of five acts before she wets her lips in my tea cup; which at least, is as inspiring as the cold Castalian spring. Had she been here yesterday, she would have met 'the god of her idolatry'—Earl Percy—but as she would not come—'Earl Percy took his way.'

BERENGER.'

From the honourable Mrs. Boscawen.

I wish you a happy new year, my dear Madam, a more glorious one you can hardly achieve, but glory is one thing and happiness is another. *Je vous souhaite toutes les deux pour bien des anneés.*

Here is Mr. Berenger's flowery wreath most complete, I think; When shall I carry you to put it on—shall it be Tuesday next? I have no day to offer you sooner.

Though always very much your's,

F. B.

Miss H. More to Mrs. Gwatkin.

Hampton, March 5, 1778.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Any apology in the world that ingenuity could invent, I should blush to make to you, for my long and seemingly inexcusable silence; but I am sure that when you are convinced it has proceeded from no other cause than illness, you will both pity and

forgive me. I have been laid up for a whole month with the most tedious and painful rheumatism in my face—a disorder quite new to me, and which not only robs me of ease by day and sleep by night, but also makes reading and writing painful to me. I have kept my room for three weeks, and Dr. Cadogan has attended me every day. My good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, have brought me here for a week, to try the effect of this salutary air, whose benefit I have so often felt before; but perhaps the beneficial influences of the agreeable company are sometimes mistaken for those of the air. As yet I am not better, and do not stir out of doors. If I were out of pain, nothing could be more to my taste than our manner of living here. The Sheridans are of our party, and contribute to embellish it.

I am very much pleased to find that *Percy* meets with your approbation. It has been extremely successful, far beyond my expectation, and more so than any *tragedy* has been for many years. The profits were not so great as they would have been, had it been brought out when the town was full; yet they were such as I have no reason to complain of. The author's nights, sale of the copy, &c. amounted to near six hundred pounds, (this is *entre nous*); and as my friend, Mr. Garrick, has been so good as to lay it out for me on the best security, and at five per cent., it makes a decent little addition to my small income. Cadell gave £150,—a very handsome price, with conditional promises. He confesses (a thing not usual) that it has had a

very great sale, and that he shall get a good deal of money by it. The first impression was near four thousand, and the second is almost sold. I do not wish to rise on any body's fall; but it has happened rather luckily for Percy, that so many unsuccessful tragedies were brought out this winter. The Roman Sacrifice came to nothing at all; the author did not even print it. Mr. Home's tragedy of Alfred ran but three nights, for which I was sorry, as the author is an agreeable worthy man; and even the great and mighty ———— ———— is in the utmost contempt, and, after the first night, was always played to deplorable houses, to the no small mortification of the conceited and envious author. The School for Scandal continues to run with its usual spirit, and is as much the favourite of the town as ever. Fielding's comedy of the Good Natured Man, which was lost for so many years, is not yet brought out, nor do I think it will this season, as the benefits and oratorios are begun.

I thank you for the desire you express to see me at Paris. I must not indulge such a wish. I shall be most happy to see you, but I believe it must be on English ground. Mr. Gwatkin (with whom I went to see Percy) told me your desire to possess so worthless a thing as my picture. Nothing but your great partiality for me could make you think it worth having. Be that as it will, I shall most readily obey you by sitting to Gardiner before I leave town, if my health will give me leave, for I should be sorry you saw my resemblance at present, so muffled and frightful as I am. I did propose

leaving town the last week in February, but this illness has been a sad baulk to me, as I had, unluckily, a most desirable engagement for every day, not one of which I could accept. I received your last favour from Mr. Edward, for which I heartily thank you, as well as for the verses. I should like, prodigiously, to take a peep at Voltaire. You say nothing of the diversions of Paris. How do you like the Comedie?

Adieu, my dear Madam. Believe me truly your ever obliged and faithful

H. More.

To the same.

August 9, 1778.

My dear Madam,

I received your favour on Saturday, and though I could not but be infinitely *concerned* at the melancholy cause of your sudden departure, yet I cannot say I was the least *surprised* at it, as it is easy to imagine what effects the dangerous state of a deservedly beloved child must have on a heart so exquisitely alive to all the maternal feelings. What a journey of hurry, anxiety, and fatigue, you must have had! I hope you did not undertake it alone. I am very impatient to learn how you found Master Gwatkin, and what his medical friends think of him. I rejoice that he is in such good hands; if there is efficacy in human art, I doubt not of his recovery, having been myself so many

times snatched from the devouring jaws of death by the friendly assistance he now receives. God grant it may be as beneficial to him!

I wrote to you, Madam, last Friday, not knowing of your migration. I hope they will not send you up the letter, as it is of no consequence now, containing only the particulars relative to my dear little friend, of which you have now so much better information. When your letter was brought, I was upon a visit in the neighbourhood, where it was sent me. There were ten ladies and a clergyman. I was pleased with the assemblage, thinking the vanity of the *sex* would meet with its equilibrium in the wisdom of the *profession*;—that the brilliant sallies of female wit and sprightliness would be corrected and moderated by the learned gravity and judicious conversation of the Rev. Theologue. I looked upon the latter as the centripetal, acting against the centrifugal force of the former, who would be kept within their orbit of decorum by his means. For about an hour nothing was uttered but *words*, which are almost an equivalent to nothing. The gentleman had not yet spoken. The *ladies*, with loud vociferations, seemed to *talk* much without *thinking* at all. The gentleman, with all the male stupidity of silent recollection, without saying a single syllable, seemed to be acting over the pantomime of thought. I cannot say, indeed, that his countenance so much belied his understanding, as to express any thing: no let me not do him that injustice; he might have sat for the picture of insensibility. I endured his taciturnity,

thinking that the longer he was in collecting, adjusting, and arranging his ideas, the more would he charm me with the tide of oratorical eloquence, when the materials of his conversation were ready for display: but, alas! it never occurred that I have seen an *empty* bottle corked as well as a *full* one. After sitting another hour, I thought I perceived in him signs of pregnant sentiment, which was just on the point of being delivered in speech. I was extremely exhilarated at this, but it was a false alarm; he essayed it not. At length the imprisoned powers of rhetoric burst through the shallow mounds of torpid silence and reserve, and he remarked, with equal acuteness of wit, novelty of invention, and depth of penetration, that—'we had had no summer.' Then, shocked at his own loquacity, he double-locked the door of his lips, '*and word spoke never more.*'

Will you not say I am turning devotee when I tell you what my amusements, of the reading kind, are. I have read through all the epistles three times since I have been here; the ordinary translation, Locke's Paraphrase, and a third put into very elegant English (I know not by whom), in which St. Paul's obscurities are elucidated, and Harwood's pomp of words avoided. I am also reading 'West on the Resurrection;' in my poor judgment a most excellent thing, calculated to confound all the cavils of the infidel, and to confirm all the hopes of the believer. Have you heard from the sweet little Cornwallian since you left her? My most affectionate regards to my dear

Master Lovell, and earnest wishes for his speedy recovery.

I am, my dear Madam,
With the most perfect esteem,
Your ever obliged and affectionate
humble servant,

H. MORE.

From Mr. Mackenzie to Miss H. More.

Edinburgh, Oct. 12, 1778.

MADAM,

I don't know whether I am entitled to continue our correspondence—it is certain I am unwilling to lose it; and I should have much sooner answered yours of a date so distant as the 18th of July, had I not, ever since the receipt of it, been wandering over the highlands of Scotland, my ideas as unsettled as my residence. When I returned home, I found a good deal of business in arrear; your letter was among other papers. We generally find time soonest to do what we like to do, so I take the earliest opportunity of making a return to it.

We are perfectly agreed about the *pleasure* of the *pains* of sensibility; I may therefore say, without trespassing against the accuracy of a compliment, that I am proud of having had it in my power to confer that pleasure on you; but you are less in my debt than you imagine; though a man, and a man of business, I too can shed tears and feel the luxury of shedding them; your *Percy* has cleared scores between us in that respect.

I will not say to yourself what I think of that tragedy. Before I knew anything of its author but the name, I could not resist the desire I felt of giving my warmest suffrage in its favour, to somebody who had an interest in it; so, for want of a nearer relation, I communicated my sentiments to Mr. Cadell. Perhaps, however, either from his knowledge of your modesty, or of the insignificance of my opinion, he never informed you of my thoughts of it. They were indeed of no importance; but the public judged as I did, and made amends for their applause of some other plays, by that which they bestowed on Percy.

Do write again, that they may once more be in the right, and (since you wish to break my heart) that I may have another opportunity of fooling at a tragedy. To some late ones I can just reverse the answer given to Romeo—'Good Coz, I had rather weep.' I will also take comfort, and hope, at some future period, to have the pleasure of paying you my respects at Bristol, though at present I have no prospect of being again in that quarter. I shall not be in the neighbourhood a second time without availing myself of your very obliging invitation.

I beg my best compliments to the Miss Erskines, when you see them. I wish them to know the remembrance I entertain of the civilities I received from them at Bath.

I am, Madam,
With much respect and regard,
Your most obedient servant,
HENRY MACKENZIE.

We find the following verses enclosed in one of the letters to Mrs. Gwatkin.

AN IMITATION FROM THE SPANISH.

THRICE happy he whose lowly lot
Is fixed in his paternal cot,
  Remote from strife and state;
Content he cultivates the glade,
Inhales the breeze, enjoys the shade,
  And loves his humble fate.

His eyes no anxious vigils keep;
No dreams of gold distract his sleep,
  And lead his heart astray;
Nor blasting envy's tainted gale
Pollutes the pleasures of the vale,
  To vex his harmless day.

The tower that rears its front on high,
And bids defiance to the sky,
  Provokes the angry winds;
The branching oak, extending wide,
Invites destruction by its pride,
  And courts the fall it finds.

Nor lightning's blast nor wind destroys
The safer bliss, the humbler joys,
  That crown my peaceful cot;
There hallowed quietude resorts,
And wonders men can covet courts,
  And bids me bless my lot.

Ah! sacred leisure—guest divine!
Thy meek delights be ever mine,
  Fair, permanent, and pure;
Chaste Nymph, who taught my erring youth
This dear, this necessary truth,
  'Be humble and secure.'

From H. More to one of her sisters.

London, 1778.

I dined with the Garricks on Thursday; he went with me in the evening, intending only to set me down at Sir Joshua's, where I was engaged to pass the evening. I was not a little proud to be the means of bringing such a beau into such a party. We found Gibbon, Johnson, Hermes Harris, Burney, Chambers, Ramsey, the Bishop of St. Asaph, Boswell, Langton, &c.; and scarce an expletive man or woman among them. Garrick put Johnson into such good spirits that I never knew him so entertaining or more instructive. He was as brilliant as himself, and as good-humoured as any one else.

Yesterday I dined with Captain and Mrs. Middleton, and Mrs. Bouverie;—good Jonas Hanway, the Bishop of Chester[1] and his Lady, were of the party. I had only been in company with the Bishop once before, and that was two years ago. I left them earlier than I wished, though not till near nine, being engaged to spend the evening at the Burrows's, to meet Lady Juliana Penn and Dr. Price.

We have been high in debate to-night, which kept us up beyond our usual sober hour. Sheridan has dared to censure Shakspeare,—I have raved and scolded,—and Garrick did every thing but beat him.

[1] Bishop Porteus, afterwards Bishop of London.

Hannah More returned to Bristol in April, 1778, after another five months' absence; and immediately on the death of Mr. Garrick, which happened on the 20th of January, 1779, she again set out for London, at the express desire of Mrs. Garrick, whose melancholy summons she rose from the bed of sickness to attend.

Adelphi, Jan. 1779.

From Dr. Cadogan's, I intended to have gone to the Adelphi, but found that Mrs. Garrick was that moment quitting her house, while preparations were making for the last sad ceremony; she very wisely fixed on a private friend's house for this purpose, where she could be at her ease. I got there just before her; she was prepared for meeting me; she ran into my arms, and we both remained silent for some minutes; at last she whispered, 'I have this moment embraced his coffin, and you come next.' She soon recovered herself, and said with great composure, 'The goodness of God to me is inexpressible; I desired to die, but it is his will that I should live, and he has convinced me he will not let my life be quite miserable, for he gives astonishing strength to my body, and grace to my heart; neither do I deserve, but I am thankful for both.' She thanked me a thousand times for such a real act of friendship, and bade me be comforted, for it was God's will. She told me they had just returned from Althorp, Lord Spencer's, where he had been reluctantly dragged, for he had felt unwell for some time; but during his visit he was

often in such fine spirits that they could not believe he was ill. On his return home he appointed Dr. Cadogan to meet him, who ordered him an emetic, the warm bath, and the usual remedies, but with very little effect. On the Sunday he was in good spirits and free from pain; but as the suppression still continued, Dr. Cadogan became extremely alarmed, and sent for Pott, Heberden, and Schomberg, who gave him up the moment they saw him. Poor Garrick stared to see his room full of doctors, not being conscious of his real state. No change happened till the Tuesday evening, when the surgeon who was sent for to blister and bleed him, made light of his illness, assuring Mrs. Garrick that he would be well in a day or two, and insisted on her going to lie down. Towards morning she desired to be called if there was the least change. Every time that she administered the draughts to him in the night, he always squeezed her hand in a particular manner, and spoke to her with the greatest tenderness and affection. Immediately after he had taken his last medicine, he softly said, 'Oh! dear,' and yielded up his spirit without a groan, and in his perfect senses. His behaviour during the night was all gentleness and patience, and he frequently made apologies to those about him, for the trouble he gave them.

On opening him, a stone was found that measured five inches and a half round one way, and four and a half the other, yet this was not the immediate cause of his death; his kidneys were quite gone. I paid a melancholy visit to his coffin yes-

terday, where I found room for meditation, till the mind 'burst with thinking.' His new house is not so pleasant as Hampton, nor so splendid as the Adelphi, but it is commodious enough for all the wants of its inhabitant; and besides, it is so quiet, that he never will be disturbed till the eternal morning; and never till then will a sweeter voice than his own be heard. May he then find mercy! They are preparing to hang the house with black, for he is to lie in state till Monday. I dislike this pageantry, and cannot help thinking that the disembodied spirit must look with contempt upon the farce that is played over its miserable relics. But a splendid funeral could not be avoided, as he is to be laid in the Abbey with such illustrious dust, and so many are desirous of testifying their respect by attending.

I can never cease to remember with affection and gratitude, so warm, steady, and disinterested a friend; and I can most truly bear this testimony to his memory, that I never witnessed, in any family, more decorum, propriety, and regularity than in his: where I never saw a card, or even met, (except in one instance) a person of his own profession at his table: of which Mrs. Garrick, by her elegance of taste, her correctness of manners, and very original turn of humour, was the brightest ornament. All his pursuits and tastes were so decidedly intellectual, that it made the society and the conversation which was always to be found in his circle, both interesting and delightful.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I beg to know how you do, and cannot forbear troubling you with my inquiries: for that a whole nation joins with you in lamenting your irreparable loss, will not, I doubt, alleviate your sorrow: but oh! my dear Madam, think of Mrs. Garrick's, after so long, so happy, so constant an union; for I am told they have never been separated even for a day. I cannot express how I pity her. I have sent to the house to inquire after her health, and was informed that she was as well as could be expected: but how well is that? Sometimes I have imagined that you would come up and lament with her: and I am doubtful where to direct this, but could not forbear writing to you on the greatest affliction you can have out of your own family. But you are happy, dear madam, in having provided against all the afflictions with which our pilgrimage abounds—the only true cordial—the deep sense, and real power of the Christian religion. "Thy will be done," contains our lesson. I will not pretend to say more on the subject, but that I interest myself sincerely in your great loss, and am with much truth and affection,

Your faithful humble Servant,

F. B.

The Burrows family, whom I have just seen, were speaking with concern of your great share in

this public loss. The Bishop of Bristol and Mrs. Newton have inquired after you very kindly.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Hill Street, Friday Morning

DEAR MADAM,

There never was a time in which dear Mrs. Garrick's kind attention would not have made its impression, but at this time it touches my heart in a degree not possible to be expressed. My bodily illness has been slight; but for her loss, my loss, yours, the world's, my mind has been sick indeed. Talents like Mr. Garrick's must ever excite the admiration of mankind; but possessed of so many virtues, adorned by so many graces, they are so endeared to one's affections, so engrafted in one's esteem, that the loss can never be repaired, never be forgotten. Some consolation, however, arises from those excellences which render our loss irreparable. His untainted morals in a situation exposed to temptation; his perfect rectitude of conduct through the whole course of his life; his amiable and kind domestic behaviour; his generosity and fidelity to his relations; and his charity to the poor and distressed, will ever be remembered by the age in which he lived, and recorded to ages to come. For some days after the sad event, I contemplated only the great parts of his character, and my sorrow was deep; but I hoped time would, in some degree, familiarize my mind with it; but, alas! so many little graces, so many pleasing qualities of it every

moment present themselves to my recollection, that the grief is still new.

I heard with great satisfaction of the resignation with which dear Mrs. Garrick behaved, and doubt not but she will be supported by that great Being to whose will she submits. Never did I behold so happy a pair. I have ever admired the dignity of mind which Mrs. Garrick possessed on all occasions, and I can hardly say whether I love or esteem her most. Her patience in such deep affliction will have its reward somewhere, and at some time; but I will confess to you I live in terrors about her health. If a sympathizing heart can give her any comfort, that comfort I can bring whenever she will admit me. I can grieve with her, and hourly do I grieve for her.

Your servant went away last night without staying for an answer to your kind letter. Till I received it, I did not know you were in town, or should certainly have inquired after your health on an event which I know must so greatly affect you.

If you could do me the favour to dine with me to-day, you would meet only a small party; and one of the company has lately lost a dear and valuable friend, a circumstance which, at this time will, I guess by my own feelings, recommend her to you.

I am, dear madam, with great esteem,

Your most obedient humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

MEMOIRS.

PART II.

FROM A. D. 1779 TO A. D. 1785.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

THE death of Mr. Garrick may be considered an æra in the life of Hannah More. His gaiety, his intelligence, and his wit, added to his admiration of her genius, and the warmth of his personal friendship for her, while in the opinion of all mankind his favour was a great privilege and distinction, formed the strongest spell that held her in subjection to the fascinations of brilliant company and a town-life, in opposition to those inbred and original propensities which disposed her strongly, in the midst of these blandishments, to cultivate in retirement a better acquaintance with herself, and a better use of her great capacities. She was not a person, however, to be actuated by sudden and over-powering impulses, or to be hurried into any adoption, especially one which implied a change

of principle and habit, without much consideration both of the end and the means. From the death of Garrick to her retreat to Cowslip Green, an interval of about five years, she gradually proceeded in redeeming her time, and detaching herself from engagements, which, however agreeable to her taste and talents, kept her from answering the higher vocation which summoned her to the service of the soul and to labours of love.

From H. More to her sister.

Adelphi, Feb. 2, 1779.

We (Miss Cadogan and myself,) went to Charing Cross to see the melancholy procession. Just as we got there we received a ticket from the Bishop of Rochester, to admit us into the Abbey. No admittance could be obtained but under his hand. We hurried away in a hackney coach, dreading to be too late. The bell of St. Martin's and the Abbey gave a sound that smote upon my very soul. When we got to the cloisters, we found multitudes striving for admittance. We gave our ticket, and were let in, but unluckily we ought to have kept it. We followed the man who unlocked a door of iron, and directly closed it upon us, and two or three others, and we found ourselves in a tower, with a dark winding staircase, consisting of half a hundred stone steps. When we got to the top there was no way out; we ran down again, called, and beat the door till the whole pile resounded with our cries. Here we staid half an hour in

perfect agony; we were sure it would be all over: nay, we might never be let out; we might starve; we might perish. At length our clamours brought an honest man,—a guardian angel I then thought him. We implored him to take care of us, and get us into a part of the abbey whence we might see the grave. He asked for the Bishop's ticket; we had given it away to the wrong person; and he was not obliged to believe we ever had one; yet he saw so much truth in our grief, that though we were most shabby, and a hundred fine people were soliciting the same favour, he took us under each arm—carried us safely through the crowd, and put us in a little gallery directly over the grave, where we could see and hear everything as distinctly as if the Abbey had been a parlour. Little things sometimes affect the mind strongly! We were no sooner recovered from the fresh burst of grief than I cast my eyes, the first thing, on Handel's monument and read the scroll in his hand, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Just at three the great doors burst open with a noise that shook the roof: the organ struck up, and the whole choir in strains only less solemn than the "archangel's trump," began Handel's fine anthem. The whole choir advanced to the grave, in hoods and surplices, singing all the way: then Sheridan, as chief-mourner; then the body, (alas! whose body!) with ten nobleman and gentleman, pall-bearers; then the rest of the friends and mourners; hardly a dry eye,—the very players, bred to the trade of counterfeiting, shed genuine tears.

As soon as the body was let down, the bishop began the service, which he read in a low, but solemn and devout manner. Such an awful stillness reigned, that every word was audible. How I felt it! Judge if my heart did not assent to the wish, that the soul of our dear brother now departed was in peace. And this is all of Garrick! Yet a very little while, and he shall "say to the worm, Thou art my brother; and to corruption, thou art my mother and my sister." So passes away the fashion of this world. And the very night he was buried, the playhouses were as full, and the Pantheon was as crowded, as if no such thing had happened: nay, the very mourners of the day partook of the revelries of the night,—the same night too!

As soon as the crowd was dispersed, our friend came to us with an invitation from the bishop's lady, to whom he had related our disaster, to come into the deanery. We were carried into her dressing room, but being incapable of speech, she very kindly said she would not interrupt such sorrow, and left us; but sent up wine, cakes, and all manner of good things, which was really well-timed. I caught no cold, notwithstanding all I went through.

On Wednesday night we came to the Adelphi,—to this house! She bore it with great tranquillity; but what was my surprise to see her go alone into the chamber and bed, in which he had died that day fortnight. She had a delight in it beyond expression. I asked her the next day how she went through it? She told me very well: that she first

prayed with great composure, then went and kissed the dear bed, and got into it with a sad pleasure.

Hampton, February, 1779.

We have been at this sweet, and once cheerful, place near a week. Alas! it has lost its perfume, yet it is in great beauty; the weather is fine, the verdure charming; 'and could we pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,' all would appear as beautiful as it used to do.

A few very intimate friends came with us. Our first entrance was sad enough. Dragon looked as he used to do, and ran up to meet his master. Poor Mrs. Garrick went and shut herself up for half an hour. Not a sigh escapes our poor friend that she can restrain. When I expressed my surprise at her self-command, she answered, 'Groans and complaints are very well for those who are to mourn but a little while; but a sorrow that is to last for life, will not be violent and romantic.'

We shall go to town to-morrow, when she insists on it that I shall go and see my friends.

From the same to the same.

London, 1779.

I have been to Mrs. Boscawen's, where I was a little amused by spending an hour with Lord Howe, lately returned from America. He is agreeable, and remarkably modest in speaking of himself. He said, It was a little hard, that after a man had

devoted his whole time and talents (however poor the latter might be,) to the service of his country, that the *event*, and not his conduct, should determine his character; that to be *unsuccessful* and *guilty* should be the same thing, and that he should be held up as a public criminal, for not doing what could not be done!

Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Vesey have spent one afternoon with us; and these, with Ladies Bathurst, Edgecombe, and Spencer, are all we have seen. She is refused to every body, but she is so circumstanced as to be much solicited on that score, for I suppose Garrick had more, what we may call particular friends, than any man in England.

My way of life is very different from what it used to be; you must not, therefore, expect much entertainment from my letters, for, as in the annals of states, so in the lives of individuals, those periods are often the safest and best which make the poorest figure. After breakfast, I go to my own apartment for several hours, where I read, write, and work; very seldom letting anybody in, though I have a room for separate visitors; but I almost look on a morning visit as an immorality. At four we dine. We have the same elegant table as usual, but I generally confine myself to one single dish of meat. I have taken to drink half a glass of wine. At six we have coffee; at eight tea, when we have, sometimes, a dowager or two of quality. At ten we have sallad and fruits. Each has her book, which we read without any restraint, as if we were alone, without apologies or speech-making.

London, 1779.

Mrs. Montagu said a very sensible thing to me the other day; we were speaking of a friend of ours, who, with great sense, gives way to great violence of temper. 'The ancient heathens,' said she, 'taught men to subdue the passions from a principle of wisdom; the Christian religion teaches it from a principle of duty; but it is no wonder that the modern fine gentlemen should be the slaves of passion, for they are neither wise heathens nor good Christians.' I was asked yesterday to meet Dr. Burney and Evelina at Mrs. Reynolds's,[1] but was engaged at home. This Evelina is an extraordinary girl; she is not more than twenty, of a very retired disposition; and how she picked up her knowledge of nature and low life, her *Brangtons*, and her *St. Giles's* gentry, is astonishing!

I went yesterday to see Mrs. Delany, she took it very kindly, but I found her overwhelmed in sorrow, for the death of Mrs. Dashwood.[2] A tender friendship had subsisted between them for sixty or seventy years. While I was there, a letter and legacy from the deceased were brought in, and I felt a pleasure at finding it was possible to preserve such extreme sensibility, as poor Mrs. Delany discovered, in such very advanced old age.

[1] Sir Joshua's sister, who, to avoid the fatigue of so much company as frequented her brother's, had retired about this time to a small house of her own.

[2] The Delia of Hammond the poet.

Lady Bathurst and I are very friendly. Apsley House is finished, and most superbly furnished; and, which is not always the case with superb things, it is very beautiful, and teeming with patriotism, for all her glasses, hangings, and ornaments are entirely English.

Pleasure is by much the most laborious trade I know, especially for those who have not a vocation to it. I worked with great assiduity at this hard calling on Monday. The moment I had breakfasted, I went to Apsley House: there I staid till near two: I then made insignificant visits till four, when I went to Audley Street[1] to dinner, where I staid till eight, and from thence went to spend the evening at Mrs. Vesey's, where there was a small assembly of about thirty people, and all clever. She keeps out dunces, because she never has cards. Mrs. Montagu and the provost of Dublin talked *most* and *best*. I was asked to meet another party the same evening, but not being able to make a polypus of myself, I did not go. And yet I had rather slave at it all day now and then, than make a single little dull formal visit every afternoon.—

Encouraged by the great success of Percy, and constantly urged by Mr. Garrick to try her power once more in the same way, Hannah More had amused herself during the former year in writing another tragedy, four acts of which had been read and much approved of by him. She had completed

[1] Mrs. Boscawen's.

this piece sometime before his death, and now brought it with her, intending to leave it in the manager's hands during the summer, that it might appear with proper advantages the following season. Mr. Harris, however, no sooner understood that the play was in readiness, than he solicited her with so much earnestness to let him bring it out the very next month, that she yielded to his persuasions, against the better judgment of herself and friends, and suffered it to appear at an unfavourable season.

Notwithstanding the disadvantages arising from the extreme lateness of the season, and the absence of many of the first actors, Fatal Falsehood, though it was very far from having so great a run as Percy, was received with very great applause; in corroboration of which, we will insert two or three extracts from the letters of one of her sisters, who was in town nursing her during a severe illness, to another sister at Bristol.

Adelphi.

If the weather should be very warm, Fatal Falsehood is to be played only three or four nights. Hannah seems mighty indifferent about the matter.

Adelphi, 1779.

Just returned from the house; the applause was as great as her most sanguine friends could wish. Miss Young was interrupted three different times,

in the speech on false honour, with burst of approbation. When Rivers, who was thought dead, appeared in the fifth act, they quite shouted for joy. The curtain fell to slow music,—and now for the moment when the fate of the piece was to be decided! The audience did her the honour to testify their approbation by the warmest applause that could possibly be given; for when Hull came forward to ask their permission to perform it again, they did give leave by three loud shouts, and by many huzzaings. I will tell you a little anecdote. A lady observing to one of her maid-servants, when she came in from the play, that her eyes looked red, as if she had been crying, the girl, by way of apology, said, Well, ma'am, if I did, it was no harm; a great many respectable people cried too. Percy, I hear is translated into German, and has been performed at Vienna with great success.

Mrs. Reynolds to Miss H. More.

1779.

I congratulate *you*, myself, and all my sex on the happy and most beautiful exhibition of your play last night. Nothing should have prevented me from testifying my joy in person, but the apprehension that you might be much engaged this morning. I would wish to come when I could freely describe the sensations I felt—at least endeavour to describe them. Miss Young's recollection that Julia was absent, &c. was a beautiful

and striking incident. My eyes are so weak I can scarcely see to write.

Ever affectionately yours,

H. REYNOLDS.

Mrs. Boscawen to Miss. H. More.

1779.

Thursday, the great important day!

I durst not wait upon you yesterday, my dear Madam, believing that if you were pretty well (as I heartily wish) you would be much too busy to give me audience. Now I shall allow myself that pleasure very soon; perhaps follow my letter, since it cannot tell you all my joy, nor present half my congratulations. For you may be sure I have had my spies *en campagne*, and I know the shouts of approbation and applause that have been so justly bestowed upon you. I sent a coach full, and well stuffed with five, chiefly men, whose oaken sticks were not idle; very unfashionable they would have been, had they remained so amidst a pit that formed one chorus of applause—not one dissenting voice. And when it was given out for Tuesday, my maid told me she thought 'they would have tore the house down' with clapping; for her part, she wept very much I found—so did many around her, but all approved, nor did she ever see a new play that was so applauded. I hope our friend Dr. Percy got in. (It seems the house was very full.) I sent him from the Duke of Beaufort's, where I dined; and shall be impatient to go myself, with the

Duchess, who has a box for the third night. Even Lady Clifford has promised to go on that night. In short, my dear Madam, this perfect triumph, though I expected no less after I read it, completes this holiday to me. My son is of age to-day, and my friend has had a most complete and merited success, to the unspeakable satisfaction of her affectionate

F. BOSCAWEN.

P. S.—Do not say a word in answer to this, only how you do verbally. O that your health were but equal to your fame! Pray let me congratulate your good sister; I am sure she is just now quite happy. And poor Mrs. Garrick feels a melancholy pleasure!

Miss H. More returned to Bristol in June, and, in the December of the same year (1779) we find her again at Mrs. Garrick's, with whom she spent many subsequent winters at Hampton in quiet seclusion, gratifying her avidity for knowledge, by enlarging her acquaintance with the best authors.

From H. More to her sister.

Hampton, 1780.

Mrs. Garrick and I read to ourselves sans intermission. Mr. Matthew Henry and Mr. David Hume (two gentlemen of very different ways of thinking on some certain points,) at present engage a great part of my time. I have almost finished the sixth volume, and am at this moment qualified to dispute with the Dean of Gloucester on tonnage and poundage monopolies, and ship-money.

Hampton, Jan. 1780.

Here we are still, and as little acquainted with what passes in the world as though we were five hundred, instead of fifteen miles out of it. Poor Mrs. Garrick is a greater recluse than ever, and has quite a horror at the thought of mixing in the world again. I fancy, indeed, she will never go much into it. Her garden and her family amuse her; but the idea of company is death to her. We never see a human face but each other's. Though in such deep retirement, I am never dull, because I am not reduced to the fatigue of entertaining dunces, or of being obliged to listen to *them*. We dress like a couple of Scaramouches, dispute like a couple of Jesuits, eat like a couple of aldermen, walk like a couple of porters, and read as much as any two doctors of either university.

I wish the fatal 20th was well over: I dread the anniversary of that day. On her wedding day she went to the abbey, where she staid a good while: and she said she had been to spend the morning on her husband's grave: where, for the future, she should always pass her wedding days. Yet she seems cheerful, and never indulges the least melancholy in company. She spends so very few hours in her bed, that I cannot imagine how she can be so well: but her very great activity, both of body and mind has, humanly speaking, preserved her life.

Mrs. Boscawen has made a little party which she thought I should like: for you must know there are no assemblies or great parties till after Christ-

mas, and till then it is not the fashion to wear jewels, or dress at all. This last custom has, I think, good sense and economy in it, as it cuts off a couple of months from the seasons of extravagance: but I fancy it redeems but little from the nights, for one may lose a good deal of money in a very bad gown.

London, 1780.

I spent a very comfortable day yesterday with Miss Reynolds: only Dr. Johnson, and Mrs. Williams and myself. He is in but poor health, but his mind has lost nothing of its vigour. He never opens his mouth but one learns something; one is sure either of hearing a new idea, or an old one expressed in an original manner. We did not part till eleven. He scolded me heartily as usual, when I differed from him in opinion, and, as usual, laughed when I flattered him. I was very bold in combating some of his darling prejudices: nay, I ventured to defend one or two of the Puritans, whom I forced him to allow to be good men, and good writers. He said he was not angry with me at all for liking Baxter. He liked him himself; 'but then,' said he, 'Baxter was bred up in the establishment, and would have died in it, if he could have got the living of Kidderminster. He was a very good man.' Here he was wrong; for Baxter was offered a bishopric after the restoration.

I never saw Johnson really angry with me but once; and his displeasure did him so much honour that I loved him the better for it. I alluded rather

flippantly, I fear, to some witty passage in 'Tom Jones:' he replied, 'I am shocked to hear you quote from so vicious a book. I am sorry to find you have read it: a confession which no modest lady should ever make. I scarcely know a more corrupt work.' I thanked him for his correction; assured him I thought full as ill of it now as he did, and had only read it at an age when I was more subject to be caught by the wit, than able to discern the mischief. Of Joseph Andrews I declared my decided abhorrence. He went so far as to refuse to Fielding the great talents which are ascribed to him, and broke out into a noble panegyric on his competitor, Richardson; who, he said, was as superior to him in talents as in virtue; and whom he pronounced to be the greatest genius that had shed its lustre on this path of literature.

Hampton, 1780.

I have been spending a week with my good friends the Diceys: they have an admirable house, and as far as I can judge of the grounds, in their present winter dress, they are exceedingly pretty. The Duke of Bridgewater has a seat in the parish. We lived very placidly. The good parson read to us every evening. Mr. Dicey lives like a prince. I never saw any establishment more consistently liberal and handsome throughout. Mr. D. saw me safe home, and loaded me with apples, cream, cheeses, &c;—not being able to procure any game. I really thought they would have made me bring away some of their clothes and furniture. As Mrs.

Garrick's year is out, we have been very busy sending round her cards of thanks. I suppose they include seven hundred people; six hundred of whom I dare say she will hardly ever let in again.

We pack off on Tuesday, for *good*, as they say, all except Liddy; and we regret leaving a new cow and a young calf; and the birds that we feed three times a day at the window are to be left on board wages; a small loaf being to be brought them every morning. I think I have told you a great deal of news.

Your letters are as full of deaths as the weekly bills of mortality; or as an honest man who dined here the other day called them, the 'bills of morality.' Who would have thought *they* had been *London bills.*

Adelphi, 1780.

The other evening they carried me to Mrs. Ord's assembly; I was quite dressed for the purpose. Mrs. Garrick gave me an elegant cap, and put it on herself; so that I was quite sure of being smart: but how short-lived is all human joy! and see what it is to live in the country! When I came into the drawing-rooms, I found them full of company, every human creature in deep mourning, and I, poor I, all gorgeous in scarlet. I never recollected that the mourning for some foreign Wilhelmina Jacquelina was not over. However I got over it as well as I could, made an apology, lamented the *ignorance* in which I had lately lived, and I hope this false step of mine will be buried in oblivion. There was all the

old set, the Johnsons, the Burneys, the Chapones, the Thrales, the Smelts, the Pepyses, the Ramsays, and so on ad infinitum. Even Jacobite Johnson was in deep mourning. Mrs. Thrale, with whom I was not acquainted, though we have sometimes met, paid me particular attention, and desires that we may visit. I wish myself at Hampton already. The brightest circles do not amuse me, and they are got at with so much trouble and expense, and loss of time in dressing, that such considerations would outweigh all the pleasure, if it were even much greater than it is; and yet nothing could be more rational; no cards: most of the company were either wits, or worthy people.

Mrs. —— the other day entertained us with all the old routine of abusing managers, and lamenting the hardships of authors. This, I suppose, has been the burden of every writer of play, farce, or interlude since the days of the stroller Thespis. For my part, I have made it a rule never to abuse either bookseller or manager, and therefore have gone on smoothly with them all. These complaints proceed chiefly from ignorance or unfairness; people expect more virtues from others, than they themselves would be capable of exerting in the same situation. There are people in the world who think I have more cause of complaint than Mrs. ——; *she* raved, *I* said not a word: to complain and resent is very easy: but it is my defect to value myself on being above it; they are passionate, I am proud; that is the true difference; if they will tolerate my vice, I ought to endure their weakness; and so we may rub on well

enough for the short time we shall last. That silly creature C—— has written a book which is foolish and offensive beyond expression. She represents her heroine when she got up in the morning to have had 'rose-coloured thoughts.' Did you ever see any?

London, 1780.

Cadell and I are going to prepare the second edition of 'Fatal Falsehood.' We talked over all the affairs. He gave me some very good advice, but says I am too good a Christian for an author. Poor Dr. Schomberg is dead; Beauclerc is dying; what terrible depredations have been made in that society in a very little time. The doctor had a great deal of polite learning, knew the world, and was agreeable: but he was the rankest infidel I ever knew: his company was much sought after, but I always dreaded it, as he took pleasure in introducing the particular subject which he knew would shock me. He thought me a poor, prejudiced, well-meaning bigot.

I expect the coach to take me to Mrs. Delany's, where I am going to visit for Mrs. Garrick, and for myself. I have sometimes the privilege of being present at her select parties, never exceeding eight, which are not elsewhere to be equalled. The venerable hostess herself, the friend and correspondent of Dean Swift, the Duchess dowager of Portland, heiress to the great Earl of Oxford; my friend Horace Walpole, son to the minister of that name; the Countess of Bute, wife to the late first minister,

and daughter (but of a very superior character) to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; Dowager-lady Leicester, Lady Wallingford, daughter of the famous Mississippi Law; and Mrs. Boscawen. They are all very far advanced in life and in knowledge, and it is a great honour for such a young nobody as I am to be admitted. I forgot to say, that here, too, I met Mrs. Dashwood, celebrated as the Delia of Hammond, in his beautiful elegies; written more than any thing I have met with, in the spirit of his master, the tender Tibullus.

We had the finest party imaginable at Mrs. Boscawen's on Friday; there was all the *elite* of London, both for talents and fashion; I got into a lucky corner; Mrs. Carter and I, who had not met before this winter, fastened on each other, and agreed not to part for the evening. We got Soame Jenyns, Mr. Pepys, and Mr. Cole, into our little circle, and were very sprightly. It was to have been entirely a talking party, but our hostess very wisely put two card-tables in the outer drawing-room, which weeded the company of some of the great, and all the dull, to the no small accommodation of the rest.

London, 1780.

My being obliged to walk so much, makes me lose seeing my friends who call on me; and what is worse, it makes me lose my time, which will never call on me again. Yesterday I spent a very agreeable day in the country. The Bishop of St. Asaph and his family invited me to come to Wimbledon

Park, Lord Spencer's charming villa, which he always lends to the bishop at this time of the year. I did not think there could have been so beautiful a place within seven miles of London; the park has as much variety of ground, and is as *unlondonish* as if it were an hundred miles off; and I enjoyed the violets, and the birds, more than all the marechal powder and the music of this foolish town. There was a good deal of company at dinner, but we were quite at our ease, and strolled about, or sat in the library just as we liked. This last amused me much, for it was the Duchess of Marlborough's (old Sarah), and numbers of the books were presents to her from all the great authors of her time, whose names she had carefully written in the blank leaves, for I believe she had the pride of being thought learned, as well as rich and beautiful. I drank tea one day last week with our Bishop (Newton), whom I never thought to see again on this side heaven; he has gone through enough to kill half the stout young men, and seems to be patched up again for a few months. They are superabundantly kind to me.

The gentlemen of the Museum came on Saturday to fetch poor Mr. Garrick's legacy of the old plays and curious black-letter books. Though they were not things to be read, and are only valuable to antiquaries for their age and scarcity, yet I could not see them carried off without a pang.

I was, the other night, at Mrs. Ord's. Every body was there, and in such a crowd I thought myself well off to be wedged in with Mr. Smelt, Langton, Ramsay, and Johnson. Johnson told me

he had been with the king that morning, who enjoined him to add Spencer to his Lives of the Poets. I seconded the motion; he promised to think of it, but said the booksellers had not included him in their list of the poets.

I dined at Mrs. Boscawen's the other day very pleasantly, for Berenger was there, and was all himself, all chivalry, and blank verse, and anecdote. He told me some curious stories of Pope, with whom he used to spend the summer at his uncle's, Lord Cobham, of whom Pope asserts, you know, that he would feel the 'ruling passion strong in death,' and that 'save my country, heaven,' would be his last words. But what shows that Pope was not so good a prophet as a poet (though the ancients sometimes express both by the same word,) was, that in his last moments, not being able to carry a glass of jelly to his mouth, he was in such a passion, feeling his own weakness, that he threw jelly, glass and all, into Lady Chatham's face, and expired!

Instead of going to Audley Street, where I was invited, I went to Mrs. Reynolds's, and sat for my picture. Just as she began to paint, in came Dr. Johnson, who staid the whole time, and said good things by way of making me look well. I did not forget to ask him for a page for your memorandum book,[1] and he promised to write, but said you ought to be contented with a quotation; this, however, I told him you would not accept.

[1] A collection of autographs of eminent persons which her sister was making at that time.

Hampton, 1780.

Hampton is very clean, very green, very beautiful, and very melancholy, but the 'long dear calm of fixed repose' suits me mightily after the hurry of London. We have been on the wing every day this week; our way is to walk out four or five miles, to some of the prettiest villages, or prospects, and when we are quite tired, we get into the coach, which is waiting for us with our books, and we come home to dinner as hungry as Dragon himself. I took an airing by myself one morning to Hounslow, and paid a visit to the Sheridans at their couutry-house, where I had a very agreeable hour or two.

Miss More soon after this letter, (which was written in the spring of 1780,) paid a visit of a few days at Dr. Kennicott's, at Oxford, where she was introduced to the society of many persons valuable for their piety and learning, among the foremost of whom we may rank Dr. Horne,[1] then president of Magdalen college, and afterwards bishop of Norwich, and with this excellent man she preserved an uninterrupted friendship till his death. From Oxford she proceeded to Bristol, where she remained till the 16th of December, 1780, at which time she returned to pay her annual visit to Mrs. Garrick, and we find her first letter dated

[1] It was to the daughter of the Bishop that she afterwards addressed the 'Heroic Epistle to Sally Horne,' in the blank leaves of 'Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales,' which she presented to the child, then three years old.

from Hampton. But before we proceed with this part of the narrative we will introduce two or three letters which passed between her and Mrs. Boscawen, just before her leaving Bristol.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1780.

I was not surprised, my dear Madam, to find that the muses met you on the banks of the Isis and the Charwell, for those are their favourite haunts, and you, I am sure, one of their favourite votaries. But you may be surprised, my friend, that having imparted to me so kindly the result of your conference with those agreeable sisters, I should never have had the gratitude to say 'thank ye.' The truth is, I am but just returned home, when I catch up bad pens, and worse paper, in haste, to tell you that I am indeed very grateful for the acceptable present you have made me; therefore do not trust to appearances, especially when they make against the fidelity and attachment of your affectionate friend.

I have been in Kent, in a house which once had for its mistress the beauteous Sacharissa: her fair form, if I opened my door, was the first to salute my eyes; then, if I turned, the gallant Sir Philip Sidney next presented himself. Immense oaks, enormous beeches, which had shaded them, shaded me. I pleased myself with the thought. I remember when I was with Lady Gower, she took me a walk one day, to a very pleasant part of the

forest, to see a tall oak, under which Mr. Pope used to sit; she had written very legibly on a board, 'Here Pope sung,' and fixed it to the tree, higher than any one can reach to deface it. Thus you poets dignify all you touch! I spent my time very agreeably with my worthy friend, Lady Smith, widow to Sir Sydney Smith, late Lord Chief Baron, and great grandson to Sacharissa, Countess of Sunderland. That lady's Bible, which I observed in the library, consisted of six volumes in thin quarto, printed by Field. The pentateuch was the first; the historical books made the second; Ezra, Nehemiah, with the Psalms, Proverbs, &c. made the third; the fourth contained the prophets; the fifth the Gospels and Acts; the sixth the Epistles and Revelations. Each had its peculiar title page, telling its contents, over and above the general one. I do not remember to have seen such a Bible, and I tell you of it, as one who has gleaned many an ear of corn from Dr. Kennicott's sheaves.

Yes, my dear Madam, we well understand the royal Psalmist's expressive phrase, "The madness of the people;" we have felt, and do believe (many of us, I trust) that only the Almighty power which stills the raging of the sea, delivered us from it.[1] Whoever are his instruments for good, are thereby honoured and deserving of esteem from their countrymen. Here it is said that the King himself was our benefactor.

You tell me, my dear Madam, that you are deep in Homer and Tasso. I shall soon then expect

[1] Written in the year of the riots.

and hope for an epic poem, *de votre facon*. Some spark will communicate to that train of poetic fire, *qui vous appartient*, and the explosion will ascend in many a brilliant star. I have been fascinated by two charming poets, and to them have devoted every moment of leisure I could find or make; you will easily guess that I allude to Mr. Mason's Life of Gray; most likely it is to be found at Bristol, but lest it should not, for very possibly the booksellers there are not so eager for it as they would be for a political pamphlet, I have taken the liberty of sending it you, and I hope you are at this instant giving audience to your brother poets, which, I doubt not, will occupy you very agreeably.

I made your compliments to Mrs. Montagu, but I can by no means do justice to her answer. She charged me to return, not only compliments, for those, she said, were too common, but something that expressed very high esteem, and yet not that alone, but also affection. And in this feeling she is joined most heartily by, my dear Madam,

Your sincere and faithful,

F. B.

From H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bristol, May 13, 1780.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I received a few days ago a most valuable treasure, Mr. Mason's Life of Gray, with the works of the latter. As there was not the least shadow of ap-

pearance from whom it came, perhaps you will conclude I was very busy in conjecturing. No such thing, my dear Madam, the action brought its explanation along with it, and I was not a moment in determining that so elegant and flattering a present could only be sent me by the friend I have now the honour of addressing. This idea had so fully impressed itself upon my mind, that I should have troubled you with my thanks for it, even if I had not had the honour of receiving the most obliging letter in the world two days after, which convinced me I was not mistaken.

I staid rather longer with my friend at Hampton than I intended, one has always so many last words to say. The Sheridans were of our party for a few days; need I say they embellished it? Your friend, Mr. Cambridge, spent one morning with us; he did me the favour of repeating to me some parodies, for which I think he has a peculiar talent; one in particular highly pleased me, it is a passage from Lucan, in which he introduces Wilkes instead of Cæsar. Do you remember to have seen it?

How do you like the Wreath of Fashion, by Tickell (grandson of Addison's Tickell)? I hope you have seen it, and like it. I was much entertained with it, if I may say so of a thing which glances a little satirically at some of my acquaintance. The satire, however, is well-mannered and decent, and not of that immoral and flagitious kind which has lately been so much written and encouraged. In my humble opinion, he bids fair to become one of the best of our modern bards; if he

have any fault, I think it is the want of plan and perspicuity, but he is very young, and will write still better. I suppose you have read Mr. Warton's second volume; I have not seen it, but hear that he totally rejects the authenticity of Rowley's Poems; so does Johnson, so does Percy, so do most of the antiquaries; but neither their authority nor their reasonings have yet entirely convinced your obstinate friend.[1]

I enclose for your *correction* (remember that, dear Madam) an epitaph I was prevailed upon to write for a very worthy lady of this neighbourhood. She was a pattern of piety and goodness. As I know no species of composition in which one has less chance of succeeding (at least your little *shabby authors*), I would gladly have been excused, but could not. Among many other faults, it has one which is very material, and yet it seems almost to have the apology of necessity. All good critics, you know, have agreed that the introduction of the person's name is indispensable in all sepulchral inscriptions; and I am so well convinced of the justness of this remark, that I think an epitaph without a name belongs to nobody: but here is my difficulty, this good lady had two names, so peculiarly unlucky, and so obnoxious to puns, Fortune Little, that I would defy any poet, from Chaucer to Cumberland, to introduce either of them with the least degree of gravity or dignity. I have not yet sent it to the sculptor, who is polishing a very fine tablet of marble for me to spoil.

[1] She was convinced afterwards.

Have you had any of your charming *parties choisies* lately—all daffodil, all rose, all jonquil, as Madame de Sevigné says?

I have scarcely left myself room to say how much I am, my dear Madam,

Your ever obliged and faithful

H. More.

To the same.

Bristol, August 3, 1780.

My dear Madam,

You do not forbid me to write to you; I therefore venture to do it without apology, and, albeit I am but little worthy of the honour, I am sensible, truly sensible of the happiness. Every letter I joyfully catch hold of, as a full and reasonable pretence to trouble you *de nouveau* with my nonsense. I think I once ventured to assert, and I believe you did not contradict it, that places made a considerable change in opinions, and that a composition or a companion which we should think insupportable in town will do very passably in the country; in consequence of this doctrine, I venture to send you a copy of a paltry ode, though, in allowing for the operation of local circumstances on the mind, I am well aware I ought to have made the same exception in favour of Glanvilla, which you once did in behalf of Hampton. If the enclosed stanzas do not prove my wit (and I think it is pretty clear that they will not), they will at least show the opinion I have of your disposition to forgive, and my readiness to furnish you with occasions for exerting it.

And so, Madam, you sometimes sit under the oak where Pope sat? No Druid ever venerated that hallowed plant, or its more hallowed misseltoe, on account of the spirit it enclosed, as I should venerate this from admiration of the spirit it once sheltered! And so you live in shades, and read Gibbon! He is an entertaining and philosophical historian, yet as Ganganelli said to Count Algarotti, 'I wish these shining wits, in spite of all their philosophy, would manage matters so, that one might hope to meet them in heaven; for one is very sorry to be deprived of such agreeable company to all eternity.' For my own part, I am willing to compound for less wit, and more faith, though I agree with Mr. Jenyns, that it requires an infinite degree of credulity to be an infidel.

I return at intervals to my charming book, with all the eagerness of a glutton. I went through it with more than pleasure—with enthusiasm. I had always a passion for Gray, which his letters are calculated to increase. His poetry is so exquisite, that the delight I felt in reading him is generally mixed with regret that he wrote so little; a sentiment which would diminish the pleasure of it, were it not so perfect as to admit of no diminution.

Though my great admiration of the poetical works of Gray had made me form the highest expectations of his letters, yet my ideas were all fulfilled upon reading them. In my poor opinion they possess all the graces and all the ease which I apprehend ought to distinguish this familiar species of composition. They have also another and a higher

excellence; the temper and spirit he almost constantly discovers in the unguarded confidence and security of friendship, will rank him among the most amiable of men; as his charming verses will give him a place among the first of lyric poets. The pleasure one feels on reading the letters of great and eminent persons, is of a very different kind from that which one receives from their more elaborate works; it is being admitted, as it were, to their very closets and bosoms: whereas the other is only being received in their drawing-rooms on state-days. In the present work, Mr. Mason shows himself to be something better than a good poet: never was there a more generous editor or more faithful friend! What an exquisite pleasure does he take in doing honour to the departed! May his own fame meet with such a guardian, and his own life with such a biographer.

I am also plunged deep in the Lusiad, and am now as much interested in the fortunes of the brave and pious Gama, as ever I was in those of the wandering Greek. *Qui mores hominum multorum vidit.* I began to fear all the enthusiasm was dead, it not having given any signs of life for a long time; but Camoens and Mickle, between them, have contrived to rouse a small portion of it, so that whether it was actually dead, or whether, like the god Baal, it was sleeping, or gone a journey, I cannot tell.

I have looked over *Monsieur* Shakspeare, as you properly call it. Don't you think it has a vast deal of merit? But how miserably inadequate must a translation of Shakspeare ever be! There is the

stature, but where is the grace?—the shape, but where is the mein?—the features, but where is the eye—

Glancing from earth to heaven, from heaven to earth.

There is the body, but where is the living spirit, the animating principle? It is here, as well as in divine things, that 'the letter killeth.' Yet I honour the Comte de Camelan and his associates. What lover of Shakspeare but *must* honour them? It would be an invidious task to glean up two or three trifling mistakes, when we ought rather to wonder at finding so few.

My dear and excellent friends Mrs. E. Bouverie, Captain and Mrs. Middleton, and Mrs. Lloyd, have been at Clifton ever since my return, which has been very agreeable to me. We are in daily expectation of a visit from ————, which we are promised by the last post.

Adieu, my dearest Madam, I wish you perfect health, and sunless bowers, which I conceive to be a very characteristic dog-day wish. You anticipated for me *les chaleurs caniculaires*, and mitigated them by your sweet pretty fan.

Your most obedient and obliged,

H. More.

To the same.

Bristol, 1780.

MY DEAR MADAM,

It has been long the fashion to make the most lamentable *Jeremiades* on the badness of the times, but we were made to believe that a new parliament would repair a great part of these evils. Now I am a living witness that this was a false prediction, for, alas! out of the small number of friends and acquaintance I had the honour to boast of in the British senate, hardly any remain—not to take care of my liberty, for I always thought that would take care of itself, when it was so finely set a going at the Revolution,—but to give me a few franks; for that, dear Madam, is the source and subject of this present philippic against the new parliament. I am afraid, though, that this complaint is impolitic, because it looks as if my friends were in the opposition, and that I had not the good fortune to be known to any of the honourable fraternity of new gentlemen, traders, and authors, who have crept in.

Your obliging letter from Badminton, my dear Madam, found me gone on a ramble (is not that an hibernicism) into Wiltshire, Hants, &c. I did homage to Pan and Sylvanus, and all the rural deities of Stourhead; paid my devoirs to the Apollo Belvidere, and the fair 'statue which enchants the world' at Wilton, which place, as the critic said of the wood and water at Marli, were it not for the pictures and statues, would be the dullest place

in the world. But the simple graces and plain magnificence of Lord Palmerston's sweet place at Romsey, is inexpressibly agreeable. I saw nothing so light, *riant*, and habitable; yet its being new-built destroys that satisfaction which arises from the association of ideas in surveying halls of 'grey renown;' terrific armour, worn, perhaps, by heroes who fought the battles of the Tudors and Plantaganets; and avenues of oaks, which have heard the sound of 'Sidney's song, perchance of Surrey's reed.' From this sort of combination of remote images, we derive, I believe, some of the liveliest pleasures we enjoy; and these delights of the imagination seem to fill up the chasm between those of the senses and of reason; they have less keenness than the one, and less solidity than the other; yet is their dominion not less powerful, or less pleasant. One reason of my making this tour was, to avoid the bustle of the Bristol election; but, in keeping clear of Scylla, I dashed against Charybdis; for as it was the great and universal saturnalia of the nation, I ran into the very jaws of half-a-dozen country elections, of which, had I had the honour to be a composer of speeches, I might have made good use.

Many thanks, my dear Madam, for Mr. Walpole's sensible, temperate, and humane pamphlet. I am not *quite* a convert yet to his side of the Chattertonian controversy, though this elegant writer, and all the antiquaries and critics in the world are against me; but I like much the candid regret he every where discovers at not having fostered this

unfortunate lad, whose profligate manners, however, I too much fear, would not have done credit to any patronage. Poor Mrs. G. read it, and was more interested than I have seen her.

I am to thank you for 'Cardiphonia.' I like it prodigiously: it is full of vital, experimental religion. I thought I liked the three first letters best, but I have not read half the book. Who is the author? From his going a little out of his way to censure the Latin poets, I suspect he is of the calumniated school, though I have found nothing but rational and consistent piety.

I have just finished Johnson's Life of Addison. There is the same exquisite discrimination of character, the same exactness of criticism, and moral discernment, which have distinguished and dignified the other writings of this truly great biographer. The only thing I am inclined to quarrel with him for, is, that he has perpetuated the malignity of that foe to genius and to worth, John Dennis, of crabbed memory. He has given a quotation of forty or fifty pages from this old snarler's barking at Cato; which produces these two evils, that we lose forty or fifty pages of Johnson's elegant writing, and that the satire, which has some acuteness and more malice, will, by this means, be rescued from that oblivion into which Dennis had fallen; and the slander will now be as durable as its object. *Entre nous*, what Johnson says of Cato may be applied to *his* Irene; the same exalted sentiments, harmonious verse, and highly polished style, and the same deficiency in what relates to the passions and affections.

My dear madam, you are glad my paper is out, and I am sorry, since I have not room to tell you with what truth I am,

Your's affectionately H. M.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1780.

This fine day seems to invite the world abroad, all but one, who is retired with the gentle, the virtuous, the ill-fated Elwina; she brought to my mind an old song, addressed to Fortune, who is accused thus, I think:

> Busy, busy still art thou,
> To bind the loveless, joyless vow;
> The heart from pleasure to delude
> And join the gentle to the rude.

How rude is the ferocious Douglas! how gentle the sweet Elwina! Oh for Mrs. Cibber to act her, just as I saw her forty years ago! for then she was pretty, and so interesting, and with so settled a melancholy in her countenance, that it was beyond all acting. You have made me weep till my eyes are quite red; need I say more? I am at Raby Castle, and I know not how to come back and talk over our business soberly.

Wednesday 10th.—I have read Percy, my dear Madam, a second time to-day aloud to the Duchess of Beaufort, and Mrs. Leveson; they will tell you that tears often stopped my voice; they were exceedingly pleased with it, and indeed seemed worthy to judge, by the delight they expressed at par-

ticular passages which were wonderfully excellent. I cannot find time to select those which so peculiarly pleased me, indeed I do not know if I have paper enough in my custody to transcribe them, were I so disposed; but my order is to blame, not commend—to criticize, not admire, and this I shall totally disobey, and I will tell you why: not that I suppose the old woman, to whom Moliere read his plays, did not find something that she fancied might be altered for the better—but that yours, having received the criticism of Mr. Garrick, I have no idea it can have, or want any other. Law and criticism must stop somewhere; the former from appeal to appeal, ends *(en dernier resort)* with the House of Lords. Mr. Garrick was undoubtedly the House of Lords to dramatic poets; and his fiat precludes, I really think, all other judgment.

Mrs. Walsingham has been reading your Essays, and likes them, (especially that on Education) as much as I promised her she would; but on the threshold she stumbled, and wrote me word that Lady Denbigh and she were in the greatest wrath against you for allowing the men so much the superiority. She said she longed to answer you; I begged she would; nothing would have pleased me better than to have seen you two *aux mains;* she would have greatly the advantage, because everything you wrote would have proved her to be in the right. I do not know whether you understand me; if not, I shall say, 'None so blind as those that will not see.' Indeed I cannot help thinking that in one part of your Introduction you

do give up our cause too much; and where shall we find a champion, if you, (armed at all points) desert us? However, I did not desert *you*, and insisted that you only contended for our merit being of a distinct and different kind, exhorting us always to preserve that distinction.

Since you have told me of Johnson's Life of Addison, I have sought it everywhere, from the Bodleian library at Oxford, to Mr. Hookham's warehouse in Bruton Street, but in vain. I plead that Miss More has read it, and am answered, 'to Miss More, perhaps, the manuscript has been entrusted.' *Dites moi ce qui en est*, and if you can, how I may come by it. I have claims upon Dr. Johnson, but as he never knows me when he meets me, they are all stifled in the cradle; for he must know who I am, before he can remember that I got him Mr. Spence's manuscripts. I am sure, beforehand, that I shall be entirely of your mind about Dennis's Criticism on Cato. Adieu, my dear Madam,

Your very affectionate, F. B.

Hannah More was now again at Hampton, and thus writes to one of her sisters:

Hampton, 1780.

I would wish you a merry Christmas, as well as happy new year, but that I hate the word merry *so* applied; it is a fitter epithet for a *bacchanalian* than a *Christian* festival, and seems an apology for idle mirth and injurious excess. What frost—what

snow! By the bye, if this same snow were of human invention, I should be apt to say, I did not like it. Yet the vast expanse of glistening white on the ground—the fluid brilliants dropping from the trees —and the green-house full of beautiful blossoms and oranges, make it altogether look like some region of enchantment; and as the gravel walks are all swept clean, I parade an hour or two every morning.

I enclose you my Ode on the Marquess of Worcester's Birth-day; it was impossible to refuse a request couched in such terms, and from such a friend as Mrs. Boscawen; but of all the wild flowers in the wilderness, that she should think an ode could spring up in such a soil, is curious. I wrote every line of it one night after eleven o'clock. I will not pretend to say it would have been better, if I had had more time; but this I will say, it could not well have been worse. The concluding stanza was occasioned by the Dutch war, which I heard of that day. I believe you will think I have invoked the muse which inspired Mrs. Mary Deverill, *parsoness* and *poetess*, when she sung in elegiac strains the pity-moving story of the thirty poisoned chickens!

Hampton, 1781.

If we commit any crime, or do any good here, it must be in thought, for our words are few and our deeds none at all. Poor Hermes Harris is dead! everybody is dead, I think; one is almost ashamed of being alive! That you may not think I pass my time quite idly, I must tell you that I had begun

Belshazzar; I liked the subject, and have made some progress in it. But that, and all my other employments, have given way to the melancholy occupation of reading over with Mrs. Garrick, al the private letters of the dear deceased master of this melancholy mansion. The employment, though sad, is not without its amusement: it embraces the friendly correspondence of all the men who have made a figure in the annals of business or of literature for the last forty years; for I think I hardly miss a name of any eminence in Great Britain, and not many in France: it includes also all his answers: some of the first wits in the country, confessing their obligations over and over again to his bounty; money given to some, and lent to such numbers as would be incredible, if one did not read it in their own letters. It is not the least instructive part of this employment to consider where almost all these great men are now? The play-writers, where are they? and the poets, are their fires extinguished? Did Lord Bath or Bishop Warburton, or Lord Chatham, or Goldsmith, or Churchill, or Chesterfield, trouble themselves with thinking that the heads which dictated those bright epistles would so soon be laid low. Did they imagine that such a nobody as I am, whom they would have disdained to have reckoned 'with the dogs of their flock,' should have had the arranging and disposing of them. I found my own letters, but I thought it a breach of trust to take them till they are all finally disposed of.

I enclose you Dean Tucker's answer to my letter of congratulation.

From Dean Tucker to Miss H. More.

Gloucester, Feb. 3, 1781.

MY DEAR MISS,

I should have been glad of the honour of Miss More's correspondence on any occasion—on the present it was peculiarly agreeable. I have very *literally* taken an help *meet for me.* She has all the useful qualifications, but none of the *brilliant.* And though it is impossible to say what alterations time may produce, yet I think I ought to acknowledge that the present prospect is very promising, and that we bid fair for putting in a claim for a rasher or two, if not for the whole flitch of bacon. My reasons are the following:—Our tempers and dispositions, our pleasures, our pursuits, can hardly ever be brought to clash with each other. I reign sole monarch, or fancy I reign, throughout the boundless regions of politics and metaphysics; whilst my queen acts the majestic part very well in the lesser domains of common sense, and common life. Whether these two empires may be so far extended as to approach each other, whereby we may hereafter complain of mutual encroachments, and quarrel about the limits, is more than I am able to foretell. But I think the probability is on the other side; because I do not feel a spark of ambition to invade her province, and she has too much sang froid on her part, to be capable of being worked up either into a metaphysical or political ferment. She is a mere *Hickman* in petticoats, the very counterpart of the insipid *He*-thing which you once

described as fit for nothing but to take care of the band-boxes on a journey, and to keep your reckoning. She is fond of this employment, and seems to be so well calculated for keeping the reckoning throughout the journey of life, that I have ventured to borrow fifty pounds from our common fund, (which I think at the end of the year will not be missed,) in order to make a provision for the support of our young philosopher at Oxford.[1] The money is lodged in Dr. Adams' hands, and if you should call upon your friends there any time in April or May, &c. perhaps you may see him in his academic dress.

But after he is entered what shall we do with him? This is a difficulty which neither Dr. Adams nor I can well resolve. He knows a great deal too much to want the instructions of a tutor. And yet there is a knowledge, perhaps the most useful of any, in which he is deficient;—the knowledge of the world, and an experience in the ways of men. But this is a science which books and colleges are not calculated to teach. He talks well on all subjects; but he is dilatory, and seems unwilling to commit his thoughts to writing. I fear that he is a kind of voluptuary in learning, and regards books in the same view in which an alderman regards turtle. However, such parts and such talents as his, ought to have every advantage for displaying themselves. I felt the want of such assistance in my little way when I was somewhat in his situation; and therefore resolved with myself at an early period in life, that if ever Providence should enable me to call uncommon or

[1] The eccentric, but highly-gifted John Henderson.

useful talents out of obscurity I would do it. That opportunity has now been put into my hands.

You must have, by every post, fresher accounts from Bristol than any that I can send. If mine are to be depended on, the American government, alias the *Mobocracy*, is already set up in that place, and will extend itself more and more, if not checked in time. Surely a spirit of insanity and infatuation hath broken loose, and spread itself all over our *enlightened world*, as it is improperly called. For instead of enjoying light, we grope on still in darkness. Not one country now at war, not one party in our divided, distracted state at home, pursuing their own solid interests, or having a regard to any thing beyond the gratifying of their wishes for the present hour. But I console myself with the reflection, that Providence is ever bringing good out of evil, and that we are never so near a peace, as when the contenders on all sides are convinced by their own *feelings*, that they are contending about nothing.

I do not presume to advise you to marry a *Hickman*, for I know you cannot digest such a thought. But I do assure you that my *Hick-woman*, if I may use the term, makes me very happy, when she says, that all my friends are hers; and that she particularly desires to join in most respectful compliments to her sister More; for she is the daughter of a clergyman, as well as yourself.

Dear Madam, your greatly obliged
and most obedient humble servant,
J. TUCKER.

From H. More to her sister.

Adelphi, 1781.

We have stolen away for a few days to town, but I am now so habituated to quiet, that I have scarcely the heart to go out, though I am come here on purpose. As to poor Mrs. Garrick, she keeps herself as secret as a piece of smuggled goods, and neither stirs out herself, or lets any body in. The calm of Hampton is such fixed repose, that an old woman crying fish, or the postman ringing at the door, is an event which excites attention. Mrs. Boscawen is very full of the ode,[1] she would make me hear how finely she has brought herself to read it by daily practice; but she says she has one cruel mortification, she wishes every body to see it, and yet has not the courage to show it to any one, unless I will strike out the two lines about Glanvilla, which I beg to be excused doing. Be cautious, I entreat, of giving copies; my friends know I am so fearful of newspapers, that Mrs. Kennicott actually refused 'Sally Horne' to the Bishop of London.[2] She has told him she will ask my consent, which I do not know very well how to refuse. But it shall be on condition that he gives a handsome piece of his writing to your memorandum book, for I am too much a Bristol woman to give anything for nothing.

[1] On the Marquis of Worcester's birth-day.

[2] Bishop Lowth.

To the same.

Hampton, 1781.

We courageously came back yesterday in all the snow; I was desirous to do it, having but a short time now to stay here, and I want a little for writing,[1] that I may afford to be idle in town with less regret. We are forbidden to do *evil* that *good* may come of it, and this looks like doing *good* that *evil* may come of it.

I have just waded through almost nine hundred pages of Madan's book, but retain all my prejudices in favour of Monogamy. There never was such a strange book under such a mask of holiness; in short, I have as great an antipathy to some of 'the gospel according to Mr. Madan,' as ever an infidel had to the Gospel according to St Matthew. A friend of mine says of him, 'This saint will make sinners after his death.' He treats the *New Testament* very cavalierly under the pretence of the most flaming veneration of the *Old;* and is quite outrageous at the general mistake, he says, that all modern Christians make, that Christ taught a more perfect morality than Moses. I believe the Holy Scriptures were never before made the cover, nay the *vehicle*, of so much indecency.

Your history of the election I read to Mrs. Garrick, and we agreed it deserved a place in the book called *great events from small causes!* Methinks I envy Burke that 'consciousness of his worth' which he must feel on considering himself rejected

[1] She was at this time proceeding with the 'Sacred Dramas.'

only because his talents were a crime. But Providence has wisely contrived to render all its dispensations equal, by making those talents which set one man so much above another, of no esteem in the opinion of those who are without them. The direct contrary is the case with riches, they are most admired by those who want them, and this becomes a spur to industry. So that I do think that even in this world things are carried on hand in hand, more equally than many are willing to allow; for the 'painful pre-eminence' is so mixed with mortification and disappointment, that its pleasures I believe do not atone for the envy and plague which it brings. For is it not much better to be easy and happy now, than talked of a thousand years hence, when you either will not know it, or will despise it?

To the same.

London, 1781.

I heard from a person who attended the trial of Lord George Gordon, that the noble prisoner (as the papers call him) had a quarto Bible open before him all the time, and was very angry because he was not permitted to read four chapters in Zechariah. I can less forgive an affectation of enthusiasm in him, because he is a man of loose morals; where the morals are exact, I can make great allowance for a heated imagination, strong prejudices, or a wrong bias of judgment. Though I have not the least doubt that he deserved punishment, yet I am glad he is acquitted, for it disappoints the party, and uncanonizes the martyr.

In the evening I went to Audley Street, where pride met with a small mortification, for not being very well recovered from my rheumatic headache, and expecting to meet only the Jenyns's and the Coles, I went quite in a dishabille, when I found Lady Edgecombe, the Yorke family, Bishop of Exeter, and, in short, a brilliant, though a small assembly. I was just able to listen, though not to talk, and was very well seated between Soame Jenyns, the Bishop, and Chamberlayne. The other morning Mrs. Garrick took me to Lever's museum; for, to the scandal of my taste, I had never seen it before. If any man had the misfortune to be an atheist, I think he might be converted by seeing that vast book of various nature collected in a room, as Galen is recorded to have been by his own discoveries in physiology. And yet Buffon is said to be an unbeliever!

Public thanksgivings were returned last Sunday in several churches for the acquittal of Lord George Gordon. I know some who actually heard it in Audley chapel. The famous Mr. Tighe read to us the other evening. He was so polite as to lament that he had not Jephson's tragedy (the Count of Narbonne) in his pocket; but I was not sorry, for I must have sunk very low in his opinion, as he expects every body to faint away, and I am no hand at fainting.

London, 1781.

Mrs. B. having repeatedly desired Johnson to look over her new play of the 'Siege of Sinope'

before it was acted, he always found means to evade it; at last she pressed him so closely that he actually refused to do it, and told her that she herself, by carefully looking it over, would be able to see if there was any thing amiss as well as he could. 'But, sir,' said she, 'I have no time. I have already so many irons in the fire.' 'Why then, Madam,' said he, (quite out of patience) 'the best thing I can advise you to do is, to put your tragedy along with your irons.'[1] I dined the other day with Miss Sharpe; among the company was Mrs. Carter and Lady Charlottle Wentworth: this last, to the credit of opposition (for she is Lord Rockingham's sister) is one of the best divines for a woman of quality I have met with. We had a very comfortable, rational day.

The Kennicotts dined here with some of their friends. When the Doctor hobbled in on his two sticks, he put a piece of paper into my hand. I cried out, 'Oh; I will not read it to myself; whatever it is, it shall be made public for the good of the company.' I put it into a gentleman's hands who I knew read well, but imagine my surprize at hearing the following verses, signed by no less a personage than Bishop Lowth:

[1] In the course of the theatrical management of her friend David Garrick, he had irritated the feelings of the Authoress here alluded to, by the rejection of her Tragedy. The lady indulged her spleen in a novel, the express purpose of which was to ridicule and vilify the character of the manager. Mrs. H. More was prevailed upon to write a criticism on the work for the Gentleman's Magazine, which she performed with much spirit and effect; but found, as she declared, so much pleasure in the free indulgence of sarcastic humour, that she resolved never again to trust herself with the use of such a weapon; and to this resolution she strictly adhered through the remainder of her life.

HANNÆ MORÆ.

VIRGINI PLÆ ERUDITÆ, ELEGANTI, INGENIO, FACUNDIA ET SAPIENTIA PARITER ILLUSTRI.

'Omnes Sulpiciam legant puellæ,'
Omnes hanc pueri legant senesque,
Omnes hanc hilares, et hanc severi.
Quæ palmam geminas tulit per artes,
'Et vinctæ pede vocis et solutæ!'
Cujus qui pede legerit soluta,
Nullam dixerit esse tersiorem!
Cujus carmina qui bene estimarit
Nullam dixerit esse sanctiorem!
Huic adsunt Charites faventque Musæ,
Dum sic pectora Virginum tenella
Pulchris imbuit, artibus, sequaces
Exemplo monitis, amore, nutu,
Informans animos; Stiloque signat,
Mox ventura quod Addisonianis
Possint secula comparare chartis.

I spent an agreeable hour at my dear Mrs. Vesey's, for, to the general astonishment, her poor husband has got another reprieve. I know no house where there is such good rational society, and a conversation so general, so easy, and so unpretending.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Adelphi, Feb. 1781.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your most agreeable little *volume* of *six pages* never could have been bestowed upon a reader more worthy of it, if the highest veneration for the author, and the keenest relish for the composition, could give the reader a claim to the title of worthy; but, alas! yours, like many other *valuable works*, is of so serious a cast as to have given me fully as

much pain as pleasure. How much do I pity the poor ——'s, I am afraid it will be almost too much for our excellent friend Mrs. ——. I grieve that her great virtues are exposed to such severe trials. Reason, religion, and time, when they come to operate, do wonders—such wonders as the sufferer in the first attack of sorrow has no conception of. Yet one cannot but lament that persons of the best sense and most piety, suffer more, perhaps, from the first assaults of affliction than any others; and those who bear distress with the most dignity, I am persuaded feel it with the greatest intenseness. This good family possess the only consolation which can mitigate such distress—a deep sense of the truth and efficacy of the Christian religion; yet I am going to say a bold thing, I never could observe that nature suffered the less, because grace triumphed the more. And hence arises, as I take it, the glory of the Christian sufferer,—he feels affliction more intensely than a bad man, or grace would not have its perfect work; as it would not be difficult to subdue that which it was not difficult to endure. Poor Lady ——, too! her distress is a very poignant one indeed; I begin to think, happy are those who do not multiply their chances of suffering, by increasing their connections!

I can better *send* you the Bishop's verses, than I could *give* them to you, for reasons which will be clear enough when you see them; as, without the least affectation, I am confounded by the praise which he gives me only because he does not know me. I would not wish any copy to be taken, as I

would not for the world they should get into print, which would never be attributed to accident, but to the most egregious vanity in me; and the Bishop writes so little, and so excellently, that people are glad to catch at any thing of his. I had a particular request from his lordship to give him a copy of my childish verses on Mother Bunch's Tales; you will wonder, my dear Madam, that so wise a personage should pardon my impertinence, in attacking learning in her own proper fort. You will not forget that the idea of new dressing the popular old poem of 'Learning is better than house and land,' in this my renowned work of Mother Bunch's Tales, was suggested to me by Mr. Pope's having modernized a morsel of no less popularity in this fine couplet,

> 'Above, how high progressive life may go,
> How wide around, how deep extend below.'

which I really believe, though he had never the candour to own it as I have, he stole from those beautiful and original lines, which are in more mouths than any verses of mine will ever be,

> 'Here you go up, up, up; and here you go down, down, downy;
> And here you go backward and forward; and here you go round, round, roundy.'

When I was in Oxford last summer, I said so much in commendation of my favourite book, De l'histoire de Messieurs de Port Royal, that it excited great desire in several reverend doctors to see it, no one there having ever met with it but Dr. Horne,

who admired it extremely, (vous savez qu'il a une petite teinture du mystique.) The libraries were searched, but no such book could be found. Mrs. Kennicott repeating my account of it to the Bishop of Llandaff, he was resolved to get it, and accordingly sent to Holland for two sets; but received for answer that it was quite out of print, and never could be got but by chance in a catalogue. Now, my dear Madam, I do not intercede for the Bishop, who no doubt would call me enthusiast, and a thousand bad names, for so warmly recommending a book in which it must be confessed there is some Popish trumpery, and a little mystical rubbish; but may I venture to ask you to lend it the Kennicotts for a few days. If you are so good as to indulge me, you will, perhaps, add the further favour of letting your servant leave it at Dr. Kennicott's. I wish some of these great divines would translate it with all its fire of devotion, and without any of the smoke; which, however, does not conceal its brightness. I think it would do a great deal of good.

And now, my dear Madam, you will readily allow that I have said enough of myself. I do not expose myself so much to every body; and I own it to be very hard that you should bear all the weight of my folly and impertinence, merely as a mark of my esteem and respect. If I do not speak or write of my foolish verses to any other person, it is because I know no one else who unites so great a relish for good things, with so much charity for indifferent ones. I hope I need not say in which

class I place my own. There is no room, I think, for an equivoque. Adieu, my dear Madam,

Your most faithful and obliged,

H. More.

To one of her sisters.

London, 1781.

Tell my father I am quite delighted with his verses, and particularly that he could write them in so good a hand; I have put them among my curiosities. I do not think I shall write such verses at eighty-one. Saturday I had a comfortable dinner with my dear Mrs. Boscawen. She is transported with the Bishop's verses. I wish he had had a better subject; but like Swift, Rochester, and other wits, hé was resolved, I suppose, to shew how well he could write on nothing.

On Friday evening I went to Mr. Tighe's, to hear him read Jephson's tragedy. 'Praise,' says Dr. Johnson, 'is the tribute which every man is expected to pay for the grant of perusing a manuscript,' and indeed I could praise without hurting my conscience, for the 'Count of Narbonne' has considerable merit; the language is very poetical, and parts of the fable very interesting; the plot managed with art, and the characters well drawn. The love scenes I think are the worst; they are prettily written, and full of flowers, but are rather cold; they have more poetry than passion. I do not mean to detract from Mr. Jephson's merit by

this remark, for it does not lessen a poet's fame, to say he excels more in painting the terrible, than the tender passions. Think of Johnson's having apartments in Grosvenor Square![1] but he says it is not half so convenient as Bolt Court. He has just finished the poets; Pope is the last. I am sorry he has lost so much credit by Lord Lyttleton's: he treats him almost with contempt; makes him out a poor writer, and an envious man; speaks well only of his 'Conversion of St. Paul,' of which he says, 'it is sufficient to say it has never been answered.' Mrs. Montagu and Mr. Pepys, his lordship's two chief surviving friends, are very angry.

We spent one very agreeable day at Mrs. Delany's: her inseparable friend the Duchess Dowager of Portland was there. This charming Duchess is very kind to me, and honours me with particular attention. She has invited me to spend some time in the summer at Bulstrode. Perhaps you do not know that she is Prior's 'noble, lovely, little Peggy.' She remembers him perfectly well, and promises I shall read a quarto manuscript which he left to her father, Lord Oxford, which contains Dialogues of the Dead, in the manner of Lucan.

London, 1781.

On Friday I was at a great dinner at Mr. Middleton's; the company was numerous, it threatened therefore to be dull; but I had a great deal of agreeable conversation with the Bishop of Chester,

[1] At Mr. Thrale's new house.

(Dr. Porteus) who is an excellent critic, and perfectly to my taste; he is, moreover, I believe, a very good man. I hope great popularity, and the estimation in which his company is held, will not spoil him, nor make him relax; it requires a steady head to stand so high without being giddy. We little folks below, that walk quietly in the vale, know nothing of the danger, and are therefore pert and censorious.

I have often said, I do not know so hard a trade as pleasure, if it be well followed. I am quite tired of visiting, and yet I do not go to a quarter of the places I am asked to. I never knew a great party turn out so pleasantly as the other night at the Pepys's. There was all the pride of London,—every wit, and every wit-ess; though these, when they get into a cluster, I have sometimes found to be as dull as other people; but the spirit of the evening was kept up on the strength of a little lemonade, till past eleven, without cards, scandal, or politics. Mrs. Boscawen threw me into no small confusion; she got among the men, not less than twenty, all Beaux Esprits, and gave them all privately, Bishop Lowth's verses to read.

A very affecting circumstance happened yesterday. Mrs. Garrick and I were invited to an assembly at Mrs. Thrale's. There was to be a fine concert, and all the fine people were to be there; but the chief object was to meet the Brahmin and the two Persees, and I promised myself no small pleasure in seeing the disciples of the ancient Zoroaster, for such these are, and worshippers of fire. Just as my hair was dressed, came a servant

to forbid our coming, for that Mr. Thrale was dead! A very few hours later, and he would have died in this assembly. What an awful event. He was in the prime of life, but had the misfortune to be too rich, and to keep too sumptuous a table, at which he indulged too freely. He was a sensible and respectable man. I am glad the poor lady has in her distress, such a friend as Dr. Johnson; he will suggest the best motives of consolation.

The other night we were at a very great and full assembly. My distaste of these scenes of insipid magnificence I have not words to tell. Every faculty but the sight is starved, and that has a surfeit. I like conversation parties when they are of the right sort, and I do not care whether it be composed of four, or forty persons, because if you know and like the generality of them, nothing is more easy than to pick out a snug pleasant corner; whereas it is impossible to do so, when two or three hundred people are continually coming in, popping a courtesy, exhibiting their fine persons, and popping out again, or nailing themselves down to a card table.

London, 1781.

I was last Monday at a meeting at the Bishop of St. Asaph's, where were all the brides, Duncannon and Althorp; and I had the pleasure of a vast deal of snug chat with the Bishop, Mr. Walpole, Mrs. Montagu, and Mrs. Carter.

Mrs. Kennicott tells me Bishop Lowth insists upon my publishing 'Sensibility,' and all my other poems collected, immediately, that people may have

them altogether. The Dean of Gloucester has sent me his book against Locke, splendidly bound. I have not yet had the manners to write and thank him for it. I am afraid it will draw upon him a number of enemies and answers, which at his time of life cannot be very agreeable. I believe where the spirit of controversy has once possessed the mind, no time can weaken it.

I was on Monday night at a very snug little party at Mr. Ramsay's. He has written an Essay on the Harmony of Numbers, and on Versification. He wished me to hear it read, and convened a small party of wits. It is scientific and ingenious, but I do not allow him his positions, and very pertly told him so, for he seems to set written rules above the 'nicely-judging ear,' which I will never allow; and he denies Pope to have been an excellent harmonist, which I will never allow neither. On Friday I dined at Mrs. Boscawen's, only we two. We had a snug day, and a deal of that social cordial chat, that is so preferable to all the mummery of great parties. At eight I went to Lady ——'s large assembly, which was very magnificently dull.

Tuesday we were a small and very choice party at Bishop Shipley's. Lord and Lady Spencer, Lord and Lady Althorp, Sir Joshua, Langton, Boswell, Gibbon, and to my agreeable surprise, Dr. Johnson, were there.

Mrs. Garrick and he had never met since her bereavement. I was heartily disgusted with Mr. Boswell, who came up stairs after dinner, much disordered with wine, and addressed me in a manner

which drew from me a sharp rebuke, for which I fancy he will not easily forgive me. Johnson came to see us the next morning, and made us a long visit. On Mrs. Garrick's telling him she was always more at her ease with persons who had suffered the same loss with herself, he said that was a comfort she could seldom have, considering the superiority of his merit, and the cordiality of their union. He bore his strong testimony to the liberality of Garrick. He reproved me with pretended sharpness for reading 'Les Pensees de Pascal,' or any of the Port Royal authors; alleging that as a good Protestant, I ought to abstain from books written by Catholics. I was beginning to stand upon my defence, when he took me with both hands, and with a tear running down his cheeks, 'Child,' said he, with the most affecting earnestness, 'I am heartily glad that you read pious books, by whomsoever they may be written.'

London, 1781.

'We are just returned from Hampton. I carried 'Belshazzar' there, thinking that in such a scene of quiet and repose, I should be likely to write a great deal, but the beautiful scenes of the country, especially at this time of the year, when all nature is young and blooming, take such possession of my mind, and dissipate it so much, that I could sooner think of writing in all the bustle of London, than in the still tranquility of Hampton; I mean unless I were settled there long enough for the novelty of rural objects to wear off. The other

day I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Dr. Barnard, the very learned Provost of Eton; he justifies all that I had heard of him, and no man's reputation is more high. We had a great deal of conversation, and though his first *abord* is not quite pleasing, yet I was never more entertained.

On Monday I was at Mrs. Vesey's; she had collected her party from the Baltic to the Po, for there was a Russian nobleman, an Italian virtuoso, and General Paoli. In one corner was the pleasantest group in the world, and having peeped into the various parties in both rooms, I fixed upon that which I liked best. These were the agreeable Provost of Eton, Mrs. Boscawen, Mr. Pepys, Mr. Walpole, and the Bishop of Killaloe. The conversation was quite in my way, and in a great measure within my reach; it related chiefly to poetry and criticism.

We begin now to be a little cheerful at home, and to have our small parties. One such we have just had, and the day and evening turned out very pleasant. Johnson was in full song, and I quarrelled with him sadly, I accused him of not having done justice to the 'Allegro,' and 'Pensoroso.' He spoke disparagingly of both. I praised Lycidas, which he absolutely abused, adding, 'if Milton had not written the Paradise Lost, he would have only ranked among the minor poets: he was a Phidias that could cut a Colossus out of a rock, but could not cut heads out of cherry-stones.' [1]

[1] This has probably been recorded in his Life, but is given here as being written on the day on which, and by the person to whom, it was said.

Boswell brought to my mind the whole of a very mirthful conversation at dear Mrs. Garrick's, and my being made by Sir William Forbes, the umpire in a trial of skill between Garrick and Boswell, which could most nearly imitate Dr. Johnson's manner. I remember I gave it for Boswell in familiar conversation, and for Garrick in reciting poetry. Mrs. Boscawen shone with her usual mild lustre.

Mr. Walpole has done me the honour of inviting me to Strawberry Hill; as he is said to be a shy man, I must consider this as a great compliment. I will reward you for reading this, with a bon mot of Sheridan's, upon a friend's mentioning to him the ill success of a late tragedy, which was full of mythology, and tiresome allusions to Pagan Deities, he answered from Oronooko, '*His own gods damn him.*'

London, 1781.

I have now put a period to my pleasurable campaign, and as we shall be in the country for the greatest part of the little time we have left, I have refused to make any more engagements; indeed I am quite tired of assemblies and conversation parties, and long for *disengagement*, (if there be such a word) and leisure. We dined at Mrs. Wilmot's the other day, and the Provost of Eton entertained me much with his wit and humour.

On Monday we had a farewell party at Mrs. Vesey's, where we were a little sad to think, how many of us might never meet again, particularly

poor Mrs. Vesey herself, who is going to Ireland, at an advanced age, and in bad health. It was a very choice party. Mr. Burke came and sat next me for an hour. I complained of my false countrymen, and he repeated my epitaph in Redcliff church. I was astonished that he had not forgotten it. The Bishop of Chester was on my other hand, and the conversation was kept up with great liveliness. I asked the Bishop if he thought he should carry his bill against Sunday amusements through both houses. Burke said he believed it would go through *their* house, though his *pious friend Wilkes* opposed it with all his might. Oriental Jones was with us; but he is one of those great geniuses whom it is easier to read, than to hear; for whenever he speaks, it is with seeming reluctance, though master of many languages.

I am just come in from paying morning visits to two deans, Carlisle and Gloucester. On Tuesday Mrs. Boscawen carried me to Glanvilla; we had the pleasantest tête-á-tête day imaginable, and walked about and sat under the spreading oaks, and eat our cold chicken, and drank our tea, as happy folks are wont to do.

We have made no visit of length, except one to the Duchess Dowager of Portland, which was very pleasant, for she has much knowledge, and her attractions owe nothing to her rank.

CHAPTER II.

HANNAH MORE returned as usual to Bristol, in June 1781, but was at this time accompanied by her friend Mrs. Garrick, who spent a month with her sisters; and in the December of the same year, 1781, she again became an inmate with Mrs. G. at Hampton, from whence her first letter to one of her family is dated.

Hampton, Dec. 24, 1781.

Poor Ayrey dropped down dead a few days ago! he was the only atheist I ever knew; but what I thought particularly argued a wrong judgment in him was this, that he was an honest, good-natured man, which certainly he should not have been on his principles. He was a fatalist, and if he snuffed the candle, or stirred the fire, or took snuff, he solemnly protested he was compelled to do it; and it did not depend on his own discretion, whether he should buckle his shoe, or tie his garter. If I had not known him well, I would not have believed there had existed such a character. He always confessed he was a coward, and had a natural fear

of pain and death, though he knew he should be as if he had never been. I cannot think of him without horror and compassion. He knows by this time whether a future state was really such a ridiculous invention of priestcraft and superstition, as he always said it was.

I met at dinner the other day, at Mrs. Boscawen's, Lady Smith; she is dowager of the pious Lord Chief Baron; really an excellent good woman, though a little uncharitable in her opinions about others; she said my friend was the best *natural* woman she had ever known.

The Dean of Gloucester to Miss H. More.

Bristol, 1782.

MY DEAR MISS,

I informed you wrongly, when I said that our little philosopher was at Oxford. He and his father went there on Thursday; he was matriculated the next day, and then set out part of his way to Bristol. Here he stayed twelve days, before I had any tidings of him; therefore it was natural for me to conclude that he was still at Oxford. When he called on me, I congratulated him on his return from the university, and was rather surprised to find that his stay at Oxford had been so short, and in Bristol so long, before I had heard from him. His answer was, that he had resided with his father at Hannam the greater part of the time. He, his father, and *Friend Rick* of Bath, spent the evening with me; his conversation

was, as usual, a mixture of great sense, which discovered uncommon parts and learning, with a tincture of nonsense of the most extravagant kind. I find that I had been truly informed concerning him, that he believes in witches and apparitions, as well as in judicial astrology. And though he bears the raillery very well, and joins in it with a good grace, yet I do not find that any thing that can be said, has any influence to make him change his opinion.

Should all other schemes fail, you and your female friends at Oxford have it in your power to make him as rich as a nabob, by giving out that he is the *true original conjuror*, whom Shakspeare consulted on all occasions when he introduced witches; and that he has made so many voyages to the stars since that time, that there is not a Madam *Hotspur* throughout the kingdom, whose fortune he could not tell at the shortest notice. A handsome genteel set of apartments somewhere about St. James's, with a white wand and a long artificial beard, would be all the accoutrements necessary, (with such good assistance,) to set him up in high life both above stairs and below. Such a hint might be improved upon, and a female genius is particularly happy in the necessary embellishments on such occasions.

My own scheme is of a much humbler nature, and as I have no acquaintance with the stars, I am content with sublunary things. I wish to set this eccentric genius on some work that might fix his attention, yet be pleasant to himself, as well as useful

to the public. Perhaps also his knowledge of the learned languages is not so critical and exact as it ought to be. For these reasons I wish him to undertake the translation of four little pieces of Xenophon, his Athenian Polity, Spartan Polity, the Exploits (or what the French would call the Campaigns) of Agesilaus, and a short treatise concerning foxes. The translation ought to be as literal as possible; the Greek language admitting of an English dress much better than any other. Were the original Greek printed in opposite columns, and short dissertations to be added to the end of each tract, explaining their several excellences and defects, and setting forth how far such schemes or systems might be an improvement, if copied into modern governments, and in what respects inadmissible; such a publication, in a pocket volume, would do honour to our philosopher, and be of use to various kinds of young students. You and your friend Mrs. Carter could lend him some assistance in the finer and more brilliant part of the work; and perhaps I might help him a little forward in the duller and less entertaining. Such was the project I had conceived, but I believe that disappointment will be my fate, in common with other projectors. Our little friend, I fear, is too volatile to fix to one point. *Your* commands would have a better effect than any suggestion or remonstrance of mine.

Just before your favour arrived, I received a letter, which gave me some hopes of being able to get a lodging somewhere near the park. My good-

natured jolly Blowsabelle has made herself so necessary to me by the assiduity of her attendance, that I cannot dispense with her absence for a day; and she will want to take a little walk, and have some fresh air in a morning, when you, and people of your ton, are in your first slumbers. She desires to join in most respectful compliments to Miss More with,

My dear Miss,

Your most obliged humble servant,

J. TUCKER.

Mrs. Kennicott to Miss H. More.

Oxford, 1782.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I have the vanity to think you did not want the many unpleasant circumstances you met with in your journey from us, to increase your partiality for the place and persons you had quitted.

We tried one evening at the thread-paper verses, and they agreed with their name but too literally, for they were only fit to wrap thread in. Sentimental cards *lived* one night longer, (I should rather say *languished*,) and then died a natural death, though we called in a physician to their assistance. In short, it requires much more wit than people are apt to imagine, to be foolish; and you are more nearly related to Falstaff than you care to own.

Miss Adams has left us for a week. The Pembroke family were much obliged by the kind manner

in which you speak of them, and send to you their affectionate compliments and good wishes. Pray do not show your resentment of the Dean of Gloucester's want of gallantry, by going over to the patriots; see what lengths they run: I should not like to visit even *you* in the Tower.

The Vice-Chancellor and Mrs. Horne say true and handsome things of you. Dr. K. and I have read King Hezekiah's reflections with all the malice you could wish us to exercise. We think the lines sweetly pretty, but we doubt whether there is not more of the spirit of Christianity in them, than ought to be put into Hezekiah's mouth. Is it probable he had so settled a belief in the general judgment? If there is to be a soliloquy in the drama, may it not be a little shortened? You see what carping critics you have committed yourself to; and when you go to town, if you would take us in your way, and spend a week with us, we would in that week, show you more ill-nature than you will meet with in a month in any other family.

I know of but one man who would make a good tutor for Henderson. I think if your friend Dr. Johnson had the shaking him about, he would shake out his nonsense, and set his sense a working. He wants somebody to come with authority, and say, Sir, you know a great deal, but there is a great deal you are still ignorant of, concerning which, if you do not take pains to inform yourself, what you already know will be of mighty little use to you in your progress through this world. I spent a few hours with Dr. Johnson about a fortnight since;

he did not talk much, but I was so delighted with what he did say, that I wished him to have talked incessantly. I believe we should have had more from him, but he was too deaf to hear the general conversation.

The Bishop of London[1] insists upon your publishing *Sensibility*, and other matters which he is sure you have by you, and re-publishing all your former publications, so that people may have them altogether, in two or more volumes. He says people had not to hunt for Lady Sulpitia's works in quarto, octavo, and duodecimo, but they were all handsomely brought together.

Here I have been told over and over again of the polite, elegant, judicious letter Miss H. More wrote to the Dean of Gloucester, and how the dean boasted of it. What a cross-patch you were not to let me see it.

When you are quite at leisure, I shall be greatly obliged to you for your *Sensibility*, but do not send it till it be perfectly convenient. I have enough of my own for present use; part of it is always called forth when I recollect the pleasure I received from your visit.

Dr. K. sends you his kind compliments. The gout keeps off, and the work goes on. Mr. —— too, begs to be remembered to you, and he gave me a prettily turned compliment for you, but I cannot get it into my paper.

Your's very affectionately,

A. KENNICOTT.

[1] Dr. Lowth.

H. More to her sister.

Hampton, Jan. 17, 1782.

How does poor wretched Louisa?[1] You have not sent me the halfpenny 'Tale of Woe' which I wrote; it may be of use in procuring subscriptions. Mrs. Garrick and I go to London before Wednesday. She, to her mass, and I, to my mantua-maker—she to be daubed with ashes, and I to be decorated with vanities. And now we are upon vanities, what do you think is the reigning mode as to powder!—only turmerick, that coarse dye which stains yellow. The Goths and Vandals, the Picts and Saxons are come again. It falls out of the hair and stains the skin so, that every pretty lady must look as yellow as a crocus, which I suppose will become a better compliment than as white as a lily. I have just made a very important discovery in poetical antiquities,

[1] This alludes to a beautiful insane young creature who was found under a hay-stack, near Bristol. She occasionally betrayed herself to be a foreigner; it was supposed a German; and always showed unequivocal symptoms of being a high-bred gentlewoman. Every care was taken to discover how she got to Bristol, or who she was, but in vain. All the ladies in the neighbourhood were kind in supplying her necessities for nearly three years, during which she never could be enticed into a house, for she said '*men* dwelt there.' It was very desirable that she should be supported comfortably in a private mad-house, for which end Miss H. More was extremely active in procuring subscriptions from her friends to second her own efforts in her behalf. Among those who were most struck by this affecting incident, and who contributed most largely, were Lord and Lady Bathurst; and by these benevolent exertions, a fund was raised sufficient to place this poor maniac in a very respectable private mad-house near Bristol, under the superintendence of the Misses More, where every possible endeavour was used (but without effect) to restore her. She afterwards died at Grey's Hospital.

which I hereby make a present of to all the commentators upon Virgil, every one of whom it has escaped; it is this—that the dish the wandering Trojans eat first on the Latian shore was a flap-jack; it could be nothing else, and the pretty childish remark of that great hungry boy, Master Ascanius (that they had eaten their tables,) means nothing more than that they devoured the bottom crust on which the apples were baked. I hope you will allow there is a great critical acumen, and much recondite learning in this remark, which I think will pass muster with some of Warburton's.

I yesterday returned Mr. Strahan the last proof of my book, I suppose it will be out in a few days, though I do not know when, nor do I even know what is to be the price. I trust all to Cadell's prudence. I have desired him to charge it as low as he can. I actually feel very awkward about this new book. Strangers who read it will, I am afraid, think I am good; and I would not willingly appear better than I am, which is certainly the case with all who do not act as seriously as they write. I think sometimes of what Prior makes Solomon say of himself in his fallen state—'They brought my proverbs to confute my life.'

Adelphi, Feb. 17, 1782.

I met yesterday at Mrs.——'s the Bishop of Chester and Mrs. Porteus. The Bishop inquired very much when the book[1] was to appear, to my no

[1] Sacred Dramas; with the Poem on Sensibility in the same volume. The work has since passed through nineteen editions.

small confusion, for the reason I am going to give. The book lay on Mrs. Boscawen's table, and we had just discovered a most ridiculous blunder, for by the misplacing of a single asterisk, the bishop is made a painter, and Sir Joshua Reynolds a bishop. Neither Mrs. B. nor I had courage to mention this, so I very foolishly only said, I could not tell when it would be published. I have sent the history of this blunder to Cadell, and with a dash of a pen it is tolerably rectified.

After all, the kindest thing to my friends is *not* to send them a book, for a present from the author is very inconvenient, as I have often found to my cost; since it forces the person so distinguished to write against their conscience, and to praise what perhaps they secretly despise. Besides, as I have mentioned all my poetical friends, it would be rather awkward after offering the incense, to thrust the censer in their faces.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

Glanvilla, 1782.

What says my dear Miss More? That she has addressed her charming poem of 'Sensibility' to one who has not a grain of that pleasing, painful quality; and that, if ever she writes upon stupidity, she will with more propriety direct to the same quarter. No! my dear madam, do not think so, silence does not always mean insensibility; and if mine has appeared long, considering wha cause you gave me to speak, believe me it was not from my being

insensible to your partiality and kindness, or to the pleasure of having my beloved epistle restored to me, but merely from the idleness of hot weather, and (what you will be glad to hear of) to the satisfaction of having had a little visit from the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort. His Grace took me on his march to Warley Camp at the head of his Monmouth men, and very fine men they were. You do not say a word in your letter of any projected march eastward; and yet, my dear Madam, (besides that it is the very error of the moon to march and countermarch,) did you not promise me that you would find means to make a visit to my cottage in your way to the northern part of England? Pray let me hear a little more of this in your next. All this month I mean to remain here, and shall have the *great cabin* vacant; and even after that I will make my engagements bend a little to your convenience, whenever you give me hopes of seeing you here. Meantime whom do you think I have got under my roof at this moment; not the queen or the princess royal, but the rare, the venerable Mrs. Delany; nor can I attempt to describe how admirable she is. As yet there appears no sign of her leaving the century which she adorns, and which you know she keeps pace with.

You may be sure that I am too proud of 'Sensibility,' as well as too mindful of your commands, not to carry it to La Casa Burrows as you desired. I see this sweet poem is altered, but I do not know exactly how: when I have the pleasure of seeing you I shall be glad to study the various readings.

Now for Mrs. Livesen—she has acquitted herself *en charme.* She came and spent her day with me two or three times a week, returning at night, till at length she became so *great* a lady, that I told her it was *trop d'honneur,* and begged her to decline it. *Elle se le tint pour dit,* and in a very few days, having nothing else to do, she produced a prodigiously fine boy quietly in her own house, and not on Highgate Hill, as I had apprehended; and I continue to receive the most satisfactory testimonials that all is going on perfectly well.

Quant a la lecture, Summer is not favourable to it; we have read a little of '*La vie privée de Louis Quinze,*' a melancholy picture of private vice and public misery; it puts me too upon looking over Voltaire's '*Guerre de quarante un,*' from which much of it is copied. I should like after this to read 'Maria Theresa,' it would come in very well: Louis Quinze was her bitter enemy, at least acted as such, and spoilt all the pacific system of his pacific minister, Fleury, who died in his harness at ninety. Can one imagine a man after seventy living twenty years first minister of France? We have been reading Mr. Warton, but we have been so idle as not to have yet finished him. Adieu, my dear friend, let me hear from you soon, and always believe me,

Yours, very affectionately

F. B.

From the same to the same.

Glanvilla, 1782.

Truth to tell, my dear friend, I thought your letter long in coming, for I was anxious to know whether you were well, and if your journey had been prosperous. Now that I am satisfied in these respects, I have given my quarrel to the winds, only making this observation, that since you have hardly found time to write a single line, somebody has lost by it, and I should name myself if the plural number did not rather present itself to my pen. I have read a motto on a coach, 'Non pro se sed pro patria' (is that latin?) I lament them *pro patria* when you do not write, as well as *pro myself*.

Ever since this month began I have been stationed here in much quietness and leisure. Miss Sayer, (who is with me) reads Gibbon every evening while I make nets, but this evening I have banished him, determined to converse with my dear friend; and indeed it is no sacrifice; many a book have I read which I like much better than this thick quarto; indeed in some parts I am much offended, but when once one has begun, it is a sort of gageure to go on.

How opportunely has my coachman just arrived with a packet from Audley Street! I have this moment torn it open with eagerness, devoured it with more; my own dear 'Sensibility!' the addition of so many guests I cannot but like, every body likes to be in good company. I would not

suppress one line or one letter of your incomparable friend. Alas! shall sensibility be your theme, and shall you not tell how much it has cost you? Indeed the most insensible (could such be supposed to have *such* a friend) must have been alive to so great a loss, for never shall we behold his like again! As to your venerable prelate,[1] you alone can decide of the propriety; I have not the honour, or advantage of knowing him, and cannot advise; I am sure the lines are excellent, and the gift of poetry (if I may so speak) is so rare, that few have ever disclaimed or been ashamed of their excelling in it, for 'where virtue is, these are most virtuous,' besides it is to his youth you ascribe these charming powers, and you make them an offering, and sacrifice to higher pursuits: still if he should have any objections (which I do not foresee) you will easily come at them I imagine. You know how Voltaire despises Congreve, for disclaiming his poetical talents, but Voltaire, you will say, is in his principles the exact antipode to Lowth. Certainly; but if I mistake not, there is upon my shelves, upon every body's shelves, (for it is Dodsley's collection) a very pretty ballad of this great prelate's *making*, and with his name to it;—so, though he has renounced the muse, he cannot disown her, only now

> '*He* does his voice inspire,
> Who touched Isaiah's hallowed lips with fire.'

My dear friend, you bid me criticise, and nothing

[1] Bishop Lowth.

can be kinder than the full power you give me over this charming poem, for now it is so absolutely such, that I am quite ashamed to occupy any part of it, though while it was an epistle to a friend, an effusion of friendship (to use a more poetical, not to say affected term) I was very proud to show it to a few.

Adieu, dear friend, and be assured I am most affectionately your's,

F. B.

P. S.—Lady Chatham sent to desire I would spend a day with her, and we passed it tête-a-tête. I hope it was some relief to my afflicted friend, who has lost two children within half a year; you may believe I was not insensible to her affliction.

From the same to the same.

1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

They are come out! the books I mean, I have found them just now in the hall, a packet from Mr. Cadell; I had them brought up. 'I put in my thumb, and pulled out a plumb;' viz. I drew out one all sewed in yellow, as I directed, and while Ayre is cutting the leaves very carefully I hope, I sit down to write to the founder of this feast. I have looked only at two pages, the first and the last. In the first I found my dear Duchess most handsomely inscribed and transmitted to posterity. In the last I read 'one hero more;' that hero should be

a hero in philosophy; *il est devenu content, et moi aussi.*

But now to your first letter.—You are so afraid that strangers will think you good. Is it *you*, my dear friend, who say that? read the 16th verse of the fifth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew. When they read your dramas they will think you good. I am not *afraid* so, I *hope* so, else I am sure they must think you a hypocrite; there is but that alternative, "for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh," and if you can *so speak*, and not out of an honest and good heart, *tant pis pour vous*; but I never yet suspected that any one could bring 'your proverbs to confute your life.'

The ancient and pleasant Jenynses spent a day with me, and not having been out of London for some months, were delighted and delightful. Adieu, my dear Madam, I have called for my *Livre Jaune*, I hope it is cut by this time, and if so you will not wonder that I cannot say a word more, but that I am ever yours,

F. B.

From the same to the same.

Badminton, 1782.

'Boast we not a More!' so says the theatre at Bristol, with peculiar propriety and emphasis. The learned cells of Oxford inscribe their acknowledgment of her authority. But I claim her as my friend, yet I say nothing to her, though I almost breathe the same air. Yes, my dear friend, I have

been here this fortnight past, without finding a moment to say a word to you, though we talk of Bristol —of Bristol post—of Bristol feasts—and here was the Bishop of Bristol at our breakfast the other day. But do I then want mementos? No, indeed, but I want leisure amidst seven grand-children, &c. &c. However, I think of you continually, and at last the result of these thoughts was a resolution that I would write to you by the post to-night, *coute qui coute;* and here I am at a little table apart in the library, but in very good company, viz. the Duke of Beaufort, the Duchess, Lord Worcester, Lord Charles Somerset, Dr. Penny, and Mr. Price of *Oxenford, Librarian.* Happily all these respectable personages are occupied in inspecting some of the treasures of this immense library; but from time to time they interrupt their studies to discourse; so that my letter is not likely to be correct, nor do you require that it should. The other day the Duchess carried me to visit a young lady, her neighbour, to whom I saw her Grace present a book most elegantly bound, and desire the lady's acceptance of it, saying, she believed she would like it exceedingly, What book think you this was? What should it be but Sacred Dramas. I have just told her that I am writing to you, she begs me to send her best compliments. Dr. Penny also presents his.

As to our ingenious speculatist, Lord Monboddo, he is returned on his galloping nag to Scotland. He wrote me, *chemin faisant,* from Manchester a very polite letter, and I have at last thanked him for it, but I doubt it was at the end of six weeks; how-

ever, he is well off that I did not cry after him, 'stop thief,' for he carried with him all Miss More's works which I had lent him. The Sacred Dramas I would have given him with all my heart, but of the plays I was proud enough to send him those that had the honourable mark, 'From the Author.' *His* books will never be read, but that is no amends for depriving me of mine.

Mr. Seward, who came to dine with us the other day, gave me a better account of Dr. Johnson's health than you do. It was Mr. S. who devised his journey to Oxford, as likely to please and amuse him, and by so doing to amend his health and recover his spirits. I do not wonder that you were both pleased with the portrait over the chimney, and the inscription.[1] When I read your account of it I felt highly interested too, and pleased,

> 'Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
> Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?'

For must not all these heads of houses and right learned clerks know that there is such a little body as Frances Boscawen, who can taste Miss More, and whom Miss More esteems. I am about to return on my steps, and shall hope to meet a letter from you when I reach home. Good night, dear friend, believe me always,

Your very affectionate,

F. B.

[1] A line from 'Sensibility,' (which poem was inscribed to Mrs. Boscawen) placed over Dr. Johnson's portrait in Pembroke College.

From Miss More to Mrs. Boscawen.

MY DEAR MADAM,

'Les morts n'ecrivent point,' says Madame de Maintenon. And yet Mrs. Rowe, who was *I opine* a much better Christian, (albeit a little too fanciful) has flatly contradicted this assertion, by *making* them write. However, maugre my veneration for the English lady, I beg, my dear Madam, that you will be pleased to adopt the assertion of the French one, 'que les morts n'ecrivent point,' and for the same reason too, namely, 'que je me contois de leur nombre.'

You see, my dear Madam, the extent of your influence over me, 'Go to Bath,' said you, 'if you have a return of your complaint.' To Bath I came, et me voiçi retablie! But I do not at all like this foolish frivolous place, and shall leave it as soon as the nymph of the spring permits.

Being here naturally reminds me to speak of Mrs. Macauley. I feel myself extremely scandalized at her conduct, and yet I did not esteem her; I knew her to be absurd, vain, and affected, but never could have suspected her of the indecent, and I am sorry to say, profligate turn which her late actions and letters have betrayed. The men do so rejoice and so exult, that it is really provoking; yet have they no real cause for triumph; for this woman is far from being any criterion by which to judge of the whole sex; she was not feminine either

in her writings or her manners; she was only a good, clever, man. Did I ever tell you, my dear Madam, an answer her daughter once made me? Desirous, from civility, to take some notice of her, and finding she was reading Shakspeare, I asked her if she was not delighted with many parts of king John? 'I never read the *kings*, ma'am,' was the truly characteristic reply.

I have got Lowth's Isaiah. It appears to me to be a work of great labour and erudition; but better calculated for scholars than plain Christians, as the notes are rather critical than devotional, The Bishop, however, is an admirable writer. His book, *De Sacra Poesi*, is a treasure, and has taught me to consider the Divine Book it illustrates under many new and striking points of view; it makes one appreciate the distinct and characteristic excellence of the sacred poets and historians, in a manner wonderfully entertaining and instructive.

My very agreeable friend Mrs. Kennicott has strongly recommended to me a thing just published by Dr. Glasse, from the French. It is called, 'A Lady of Quality's advice to her Children.' &c. The author seems to have known perfectly the human heart, and to have despised the world from a full conviction of its nothingness, upon a thorough acquaintance with it.

I have just been running over the posthumous Letters of Shenstone and his correspondents, and I think them the worst collection that ever was published with real names; I must except those of the Duchess of Somerset; these are but few, but they

breathe a spirit of genuine piety and sterling sense. Do not you, my dear Madam, find something touching in a *real* correspondence, however indifferently executed? To see a commerce of affection carried on between a set of persons from their youth, when all is gay and smiling; then to have the same people arriving at the next period, when they are the slaves of cares, of vexation, and of disappointment; and then to watch them fall one by one, through the broken arches of the bridge of life, till, perhaps, but one is left of the social set; and surely in this case, '*It is the survivor dies*,'—last of all, he himself falls, and you are told in a note, perhaps, 'That this ingenious gentleman, just as he attained some important point which had been the object of his ambition, or reached the summit of his wishes by the possession of an ample fortune—*died*.' Whether this will have the honour to kiss your hands in town, or whether you were tempted to Badminton by your beloved Duchess, I know not; but this I know, that I am with perfect respect, dearest Madam,

Ever yours,

H. More.

From H. More to her sister.

London, 1782.

The word *Sacred* in the title is a damper to the dramas. It is tying a millstone about the neck of Sensibility, which will drown them both together. I was one night at a large blue stocking party, at the Bishop of St. Asaph's. All the old set were

there that death and sickness have spared, with the addition of the Bishop of Peterborough, (Hinchliffe.)

Bishop Lowth has just finished the Dramas, and sent me word, that although I have paid him the most swinging compliment he ever received, he likes the whole book more than he can say. But the Bishop of Chester's compliment was most solid: he said he thought it would do a vast deal of *good;* and that is the praise best worth having. Well, I think I have said enough for myself now, or I could treat you with some more fine things from other quarters, and which I believe as little as those who utter them; so there is no harm done on my part at least, for I had neither the guilt of falsehood, nor the weakness of credulity.

Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Chapone, and Mrs. Carter, are mightily pleased that I have attacked that mock feeling and sensibility which is at once the boast and disgrace of these times, and which is equally deficient in taste and truth. Ask Dr. Stonehouse if he has read 'Cardiphonia,' by Mr. Newton of Olney. There is in it much vital religion, and much of the experience of a good Christian, who feels and laments his own imperfections, and weaknesses. I am up to the ears in books. I have just finished six volumes of Jortin's Sermons; elegant, but cold, and very low in doctrine,—'plays round the head, but comes not near the heart.' Cardiphonia does; I like it much, though not every sentiment or expression it contains. I have almost gone through three very thick quartos of Mr. Gibbon's History of the Lower Empire; a fine, but insidious

narrative of a dull period; this I read aloud every day from dinner to tea. It is melancholy to observe the first corruptions of Christianity in the fourth century, and I never rise from the book, without feeling sad and disgusted. Gibbon is a malignant painter, and though he does give the likeness of depraved Christianity, he magnifies deformities, and takes a profane delight in making the picture as hideous as he can. Indeed, in the two last volumes he has taken some pains to hide the cloven foot; but whenever a Christian emperor, or bishop of established reputation is brought forward, his encomiums have so much coldness, and his praises so much sneer, that you cannot help discovering contempt where he professes panegyric: but of all the birds in the air, who do you think is his favourite—the strict and rigid Athanasius! Of all the saints, and all the fathers, I should never have guessed *he* would have been the object of Mr. Gibbon's applause. Julian you may naturally suppose is the man after his own heart; I expected it would be so. He is more decent on the subject of Constantine's conversion than I expected; though indeed I should be very sorry that the truth of the Christian religion hung by so slender a thread as that miracle. However, I am now plunging into other studies than the disputes of Arius and his antagonists, with which my head has been filled, and am pleasantly engaged to spend the evening with Eneas, at Evander's rustic banquet; which, however, I shall not half enjoy, because I know that my favourite Pallas will be killed before I go to bed.

From the same to the same.

London, 1782.

I spent an evening last week at Dr. Kennicott's, with the new Provost of Eton, and Mrs. Roberts. I have a certain awkwardness about me, which I have never yet been able to get rid of; it is, that I can never congratulate any man on honours and dignities which fall to him by the death of another. I tried to wish Dr. Roberts joy, but could not do it; I do not much wonder at it indeed in this particular case, because I was very fond of Dr. Barnard, and have received a thousand attentions from him. However, I am glad for the sake of so many of my friends who are connected with him, that Dr. Roberts is made Provost. He is a good poet, and a respectable man; an appendage which does not always belong to a good poet. *Tant pis.* On Wednesday I dined at Lady Middleton's, with Mrs. Carter, &c. I was quite flattered with the many cordial things good Jonas Hanway said to me about the Dramas. He told me he had sat down to read them with fear and trembling, as he had persuaded himself it was taking an undue liberty with the Scriptures; but he had no sooner finished them, than he ran off to the bookseller, bought three or four, and went to a great boarding-school, where he has some little friends. He gave the governess the book, and told her it was part of her duty to see that all her girls studied it thoroughly.

I spent the evening at Dr. Kennicott's. Among

other company was mythology Bryant, who is as pleasant as he is learned. We have since dined together at Mrs. Montagu's, and are become great friends. He 'bears his faculties so meekly,' and has such simplicity of manners, that I take to him as I did to Hermes Harris, whom every body must regret, that had the pleasure and advantage of knowing him. Only Bryant is the pleasanter man. He told me an amusing anecdote of one of the little princes. He had been that morning to Windsor to present his book. He was met in the anti-chamber by the youngest of them, who begged to look at it. When it was put into his hands, he held it upside down, and glancing his eyes for a moment over the pages, returned it with an air of important graciousness, pronouncing it—excellent!

We have been a few days at Hampton, from whence we returned yesterday: the weather was unpleasant, and windy enough, yet I contrived to be out of doors the greater part of the time; it does me a vast deal of good to go for a few days into pure air, after being smoke-dried in this 'scene of sin and sea-coal.'

I dined to-day at Apsley House. I was exceedingly diverted with my Lord Chancellor, who, the minute he saw me, cried out? 'Well, what do they say? is the minister to go out?' I could not help saying, he put me in mind of Sir Robert Walpole, who on being asked the same question, replied, 'I really do not know, I have not seen the papers.'

The next day I was at Bishop Barrington's, he is a delightful man; the more I know of him, the

more I like him; quite the man of breeding, with great sense and piety. I am told they spend good part of their fortune in acts of charity. I also met your new Bishop, Dr. Bagot. A thought to the memory of his unburied predecessor filled my mind, while every body was congratulating him on his new honours. He is a good man; of exact morals, and has a great deal of that charity which giveth her goods to the poor, but not quite so much of that which consists in tenderness to the opinions of others. I dined another day with Dr. ——. He had not read my book, which saved me from a violent quarrel; for you may guess how great his dislike must be to a book which begins with praising Milton, and ends with praising God.

I breakfasted with Miss Hamilton the other morning at St. James's. There was only dear Mrs. Carter, and a very agreeable nobleman. Miss H. told the queen she expected me, and she charged her with all manner of handsome and flattering messages, desiring me above all things to pursue the same path, and to go on by writing a sacred drama upon the history of Joseph.

Hampton, 1782.

When I was in town last week, we had another *last* breakfast at St. James's. There I found Lord Monboddo, Mrs. Carter, that pleasantest of the peerage Lord Stormont, and Count Marechale, a very agreeable foreign nobleman, and a worthy man: he has almost promised to put the story of our poor insane Louisa into German for me. I was three

times with Mrs. Montagu the week I stayed in town. We spent one evening with her and Miss Gregory alone, to take leave of the Hill Street house; and you never saw such an air of ruin and bankruptcy as every thing around us wore. We had about three feet square of carpet, and that we might all put our feet upon it we were obliged to sit in a circle in the middle of the room; just as if we were playing at 'hunt the slipper.' She was full of encomiums of Bristol, and of every one she saw there. She is now settled in Portman Square, where I believe we were among the first to pay our compliments to her. I had no conception of any thing so beautiful. To all the magnificence of a very superb London house, is added the scenery of a country retirement. It is so seldom that any thing superb is pleasant, that I was extremely struck with it. I could not help looking with compassion on the amiable proprietor, *shivering at a breeze:* and who can at the best enjoy it so very little a while. She has however my ardent wishes for her continuance in a world to which she is an ornament and a blessing.

On Sunday, I breakfasted at the Bishop of Chester's, and after a couple of hours good conversation, they took me to the Chapel Royal, where he preached; 'as I know committee-men, and committee-men know me,' I was of course well accommodated; else it is but a disagreeable place to go to, for it takes up almost all the day to go to church once, and there is more music, and more bustle, and more staring than I like. The king and queen

both looked very pale. The sermon, which I should have blamed in a village, was very well suited to a court. It was an eloquent and able vindication of Christianity; the text, "For the Jews seek a sign," &c. They were so kind as to ask me to eat some orthodox beef and pudding with them, which I declined.

At a party the other day I was placed next General Paoli, and as I have not spoken seven sentences of Italian these seven years, I had not that facility in expressing myself which I used to have. I therefore begged hard to carry on the conversation in French. By the bye I believe I never told you that Paoli is my chief beau and flirt this winter. We talk whole hours. He has a general good taste in the Belles Lettres, and is fond of reciting passages from Dante and Ariosto. He is extremely lively when set a going; quotes from Shakspeare, and raves in his praise. He is particularly fond of Romeo and Juliet, I suppose because the scene is laid in Italy. I did not know he had such very agreeable talents; but he will not talk in English, and his French is mixed with Italian. He speaks no language with purity.

On Monday I was at a very great assembly at the Bishop of St. Asaph's. Conceive to yourself one hundred and fifty or two hundred people met together, dressed in the extremity of the fashion; painted as red as bacchanals; poisoning the air with perfumes; treading on each other's gowns; making the crowd they blame; nor one in ten able to get a chair; protesting they are engaged to ten

other places; and lamenting the fatigue they are not obliged to endure; ten or a dozen card-tables, crammed with dowagers of quality, grave ecclesiastics, and yellow admirals; and you have an idea of an assembly. I never go to these things when I can possibly avoid it, and stay when there as few minutes as I can.

Hampton, 1782.

The verses I enclose were written in consequence of a little accident that happened at an Oyster Club, consisting of about half a dozen learned men, and two or three ladies. I think them neatly turned. It is no small compliment that I have had lately three sprightly copies of verses from three of the gravest men in England, whom posterity will hardly believe to have written epigrams! Before we left the supper-table, Dr. Horne slipped a piece of paper into my hand, upon which I observed he had been writing, concealing it under the table.

'To Bamber Gascoigne, Esq. on his having accidentally overturned a cruet of vinegar and oil upon a gauze apron of Miss Hannah More's, alluding to the good temper with which she laughed off the accident.

'Like Hannibal why dost thou come
With vinegar prepared,
As if the gentle Hannah's heart
Like Alpine rocks were hard?

'All sharp and poignant as thou art,
The acid meets a foil,
Obedient still to nature's law
Superior floats the oil.'

I believe I shall soon be as bad, or I should rather say as good, as my melancholy friend: for the follies, and distresses, and vices of this town, especially of the great world, throw a gloom over, and sadden the spirit of pleasure in society. I hear of nothing but politics, destruction, and despair, and those who grumble are such excellent calculators, that I believe their morals, estates, and constitutions will be knocked up much at the same time with their country. I find the general character and dispositions of the town grow worse every winter, and then they talk of the taxes, and the high price of sugar and pepper, as if *these* were the only sources of all the evils we suffer.

I am diverted with the conjectures which are formed of my principles, from the Dramas. Some say I am a mystic, because I make Hezekiah talk of the highest of his claims to mercy being founded on *indulgence* and not *reward*.

London, 1782.

I paid my visit to Apsley House on Wednesday. The Lord Chancellor was particularly kind and friendly, and gave me a pressing invitation to dine there the next day, or any other day when he could get disengaged from the cabinet; but charged me never to come when he had any engagement abroad. On Saturday I dined with the patriots at Bishop Shipley's. You may be sure they were in high spirits at so large a division in the House of Commons. Indeed I could not help rejoicing with them at any event that bids fair to put an end to this ill-omened war.

London, April 7, 1782.

I met Mr. Hosier in the Strand a few days ago. and as he promised to call on me to-morrow morning to take any thing I might have to send, I will try to get a few lines ready for him. I have been very well of my complaint since I wrote last, but my mind has not been in so good a state as my body, which you will readily imagine, if you happened to remark a shocking paragraph in last Thursday's paper.

The dreadful calamity which has overtaken one of the most amiable men I ever knew, has occupied our minds and hearts so much, that we have not been able to write, visit, or do any thing else. Chamberlayne! the amiable, the accomplished, the virtuous, the religious Chamberlayne! in the full vigour of his age, high in reputation, happy in his prospects, and in his connexions; honours and emoluments courting his acceptance; in a momentary fit of phrenzy, threw himself out of the Treasury window; was taken up alive, and lived thirty-six hours in the most perfect possession of his mental activity, his religion, and his reasoning faculties. The spine was broken, so that he lost all sensation, and was dead all that time below the throat, having not the least symptom of feeling or life, but in his head, which was clear and perfect. Judge what the dear Kennicott felt! I went to her immediately. Never did I see the power of the Christian religion so manifested. She divided her attention between this beloved

brother; and her poor sick husband, and went backward and forward, from one house to the other, not suffering a tear to fall, or a complaint to escape her. The dying man, with an astonishing composure and clearness, settled his affairs with both worlds, sent for the clerks, did Treasury business, settled his private affairs, sent for his brother the Provost of Eton, and desired him to pray with him. He did; and asked him if he should give him the sacrament: he said no, he had received it on Sunday; but that he had spent a very improper Good Friday, having done business with Lord Rockingham, contrary to his custom on that day. He never seemed to feel any remorse, or to reproach his conscience with the guilt of suicide. He said his *intention* was guiltless;—that it was the impulse of the moment; he was glad to die, but wished it had pleased God that it had been of a fever. Honours and riches, which are so dear to other men, had no charms for this extraordinary creature. In vain had they solicited and entreated him to accept of this place; no, he defended himself with the most unshaken firmness. 'He would be a drudge, he would labour, but he would not be conspicuous, he would not be responsible, he would not be in parliament.' (I have since heard that he made all Lord North's calculations, but was so totally void of vanity, that he would never appear in it.) In vain they represented to him, that he was not only hurting himself, but that it was an injury to the state, to withdraw such talents from its service. In a fatal moment he at length consented to accept it, on the uncom-

mon condition that they should *reduce* the salary. After this consent, he never had a moment's peace, and little or no sleep: this brought on a low nervous fever, but not to confine him a moment. I saw him two days before. He looked pale and eager, and talked with great disgust of his place, on my congratulating him on such an acquisition. We chatted away, however, and he grew pleasant, and we parted—never to meet again. Had you known him, you would not wonder at the universal grief his death has occasioned. To as much religion, virtue, and purity as *Griffin* possessed, he added all that the world, and all that literature could give. He had the rare merit of having preserved the most unshaken integrity, the greatest tenderness of conscience, and the strongest religious principle, in all the bustle and temptation of the *great*, and all the scepticism and infidelity of the *learned* world. He was one of the politest scholars of the age. Poor Mrs. Kennicott! He was the pride of their family.

On the same day, my most amiable friend Mrs. Smith departed. She wanted but little of being an angel before her death, for such a preparation, and such a departure I hardly ever heard of. I heard both these dismal tidings at an assembly; you will judge whether I was able to stay at it. We went and put off all our engagements which were numerous. I had in one day the painful spectacle of two of the worthiest families I ever knew, the Burrowses and the Kennicotts, becoming two of the most wretched. Chamberlayne and the Burrowses were the most

intimate friends. I left Mrs. Kennicott, to go to condole with the Burrowses, on the loss of their excellent sister, but instead of comfort carried them the additional shock of Chamberlayne's calamity. Friday I was to have gone to Mrs. Montagu's, but I was not in spirits to listen to the voice of the charmer. I went to dine where was Sir William Musgrave, the great virtuoso; and as I have not a spark of virtú in my composition, and the conversation ran on nothing else, I was allowed to be silent, for which I was very well qualified.

Monday Morning.

Sir Joshua told me the other night at tea, that he had that morning finished a work he had been much engaged in, which is writing Notes to a translation which Mr. Mason is making, of Fresnoy's Latin Poem on Painting. He has been many years about it. I dare say it will be a valuable work, for Mason is a good poet, and Sir Joshua an excellent critic, not merely in his own art, but in all elegant literature. But Mason is a little alarmed at the comparison which he fears will be made, between his work and Pope's Epistle to Jarvis. The newest blue stocking I know, and whom I meet every where, is a Mr. Locke; a man of fashion, of elegant manners, and so deep in virtú, that every artist of every sort allows Mr. Locke to beat him even in the secrets of his own art.

London, 1782.

Poor Johnson is in a bad state of health: I fear his constitution is broken up; I am quite grieved at it; he will not leave an abler defender of religion and virtue behind him; and the following little touch of tenderness which I heard of him last night from one of the Turk's Head Club, endears him to me exceedingly. There are always a great many candidates ready, when any vacancy happens in that club, and it requires no small interest and reputation to get elected; but upon Garrick's death, when numberless applications were made to succeed him, Johnson was deaf to them all; he said, No, there never could be found any successor worthy of such a man; and he insisted upon it there should be a year's widowhood in the club, before they thought of a new election. In Dr. Johnson some contrarieties very harmoniously meet: if he has too little charity for the opinions of others, and too little patience with their faults, he has the greatest tenderness for their persons. He told me the other day, he hated to hear people whine about metaphysical distresses, when there was so much want and hunger in the world. I told him I supposed, then, he never wept at any tragedy but Jane Shore, who had died for want of a loaf. He called me a saucy girl, but did not deny the inference.

I spent a delightful day with Mrs. Delany. She is eighty-two years old, and blind, yet she is the object of my veneration, and I almost said envy. Such an excellent mind, so cultivated, such a tran-

quil grateful spirit, such a composed piety! She retains all that tenderness of heart which people are supposed to lose, and generally *do* lose in a very advanced age. She told me with some tears, that she had no dread of death, (besides her extreme unworthiness) but what arose from the thought, how terribly her loss would be felt by one or two dear friends. Her courage entirely sunk under that idea.

London, 1782.

Thursday I spent the evening at the Bishop of Llandaff's. Mrs. Barrington is so perfectly well-bred, and the Bishop[1] so delightful, that it is impossible not to be happy in their company. Mitred Chester and all the favourties were there. On Good Friday I went to hear the Bishop of Llandaff preach, he is extremely sensible, and deeply serious. Mrs. Carter and I met at a little breakfast party, with a French lady who writes metaphysical books. We got into great disgrace, for saying that a little common sense, and a little Scripture, would lead one much further and safer, than volumes of metaphysics. She forgave us, however, on condition we would promise to read two huge quartos, which she has just translated. What Mrs. Carter will do, I know not, but I shall certainly never fulfil my part of the compact. It is a terrible fetter upon the liberty of free-born English conversation, to have so many foreigners as this town now abounds with, imposing their language upon us.

[1] Dr. Barrington, afterwards Bishop of Durham.

It has affected me very much to hear of our King's being constrained to part with all his confidential friends, and his own personal servants, in the late general sweep. Out of an hundred stories, I will only tell you one, which concerns your old acquaintance Lord Bateman: he went to the King as usual to ask if his majesty would please to hunt the next day; 'Yes, my lord,' replied the King, 'but I find with great grief that I am not to have the satisfaction of your company.' This was the first intimation he had had of the loss of his place; I really think the contest with France and America might have been settled, though the buck-hounds had retained their old master.

I dined very pleasantly one day last week at the Bishop of Chester's. Johnson was there, and the bishop was very desirous to draw him out, as he wished to show him off to some of the company who had never seen him. He begged me to sit next him at dinner, and to devote myself to making him talk. To this end, I consented to talk more than became me, and our stratagem succeeded. You would have enjoyed seeing him take me by the hand in the middle of dinner, and repeat with no small enthusiasm, many passages from the 'Fair Penitent,' &c. I urged him to take a *little* wine, he replied, 'I can't drink a *little*, child, therefore I never touch it. Abstinence is as easy to me, as *temperance* would be difficult.' He was very good-humoured and gay. One of the company happened to say a word about poetry, 'Hush, hush,' said he, 'it is dangerous to say a word of poetry before her; it is talking of the

art of war before Hannibal.' He continued his jokes, and lamented that I had not married Chatterton, that posterity might have seen a propagation of poets.

The metaphysical and philological Lord Monboddo breakfasted with us yesterday; he is such an extravagant adorer of the ancients, that he scarcely allows the English language to be capable of any excellence, still less the French. He has a hearty contempt for that people and their language. He said we moderns were entirely degenerated. I asked in what? 'In every thing,' was his answer: 'Men are not so tall as they were; women are not so handsome as they were; nobody can now write a long period; every thing dwindles.' I ventured to say that though long periods were fine in oratory and declamation, yet that such was not the language of passion. He insisted that it was. I defended my opinion by many passages from Shakspeare, among others, those broken bursts of passion in Constance, 'Gone to be married!' 'Gone to swear a truce!' 'False blood with false blood joined!' Again, 'My name is Constance, I am Geoffrey's wife—Young Arthur is my son, and he is slain.' We then resumed our old quarrel about the slave trade. He loves slavery upon principle. I asked him how he could vindicate such an enormity. He owned it was because Plutarch justified it. Among much just thinking and some taste, especially in his valuable third volume on the 'Origin and Progress of Language,' he entertains some opinions so absurd, that they would be hardly credible, if he did not deliver them

himself, both in writing and conversation, with a gravity which shows that he is in earnest, but which makes the hearer feel, that 'to be grave exceeds all power of face.' He is so wedded to system, that as Lord Barrington said to me the other day, rather than sacrifice his favourite opinion, that men were born with tails, he would be contented to wear one himself.'

Hampton, 1782.

The other morning the captain of one of Commodore Johnson's Dutch prizes breakfasted at Sir Charles Middleton's, and related the following little anecdote. One day he went out of his own ship, to dine on board another. While he was there a storm arose, which in a short time, made an entire wreck of his own ship, to which it was impossible for him to return. He had left on board two little boys, one four, the other five years old, under the care of a poor black servant. The people struggled to get out of the sinking ship into a large boat, and the poor black took his two little children, and having tied them into a bag, and put in a little pot of sweatmeats for them, slung them across his shoulder, and put them into the boat. The boat by this time was quite full: the black was stepping into it himself, but was told by the master there was no room for him, so that either he or the children must perish, for the weight of both would sink the boat. The exalted heroic negro did not hesitate a moment. Very well, said he, give my duty to my master, and tell him I beg pardon for all my faults. And then—guess the rest—

plunged to the bottom never to rise again, till the sea shall give up her dead. I told it the other day to Lord Monboddo, who fairly burst into tears. The greatest lady in this land wants me to make an elegy of it, but it is above poetry. Did I tell you I breakfasted at Lord Barrington's. I am now in love with all the four brothers of that noble family. I think the Peer as agreeable as any of them, always excepting the Bishop, however, whose conversation that morning was, as it always is, instructive and delightful. In the evening, I went to a small party where Lord Stormont made the chief figure, among the male talkers. Mrs. Crewe looked beautifully, and Lady Susan talked *wittily*. That I talked prudently you will allow, when I tell you that I caught myself in an invective against the new ministry, which I wisely thought proper to address to Lady Charlotte Wentworth, forgetting at the moment that she was Lord Rockingham's sister.

Lord Pembroke came in laughing; I asked what diverted him, he told me he had met George Selwyn, who found himself very much annoyed in the street with chimney-sweeping boys. They were very clamorous; surrounded, daubed, and persecuted him; in short, would not let him go till they had forced money from him; at length he made them a low bow and cried, 'Gentlemen, I have often heard of the *Majesty* of the people, and I presume your highnesses are in court mourning.'

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

1782.

DEAR MADAM,

As you are the best of Secretaries, you are also I dare say the best of Interpreters; and I beg you to translate the sentiments of the Smelts and Montagus into the most forcible language, and assure Mrs. Garrick that it is with great regret we are, by *our* engagements and *hers*, obliged to defer the honour and pleasure of dining with her till Wednesday sen'night. These delays of what one likes, might suit well with the antediluvian lease of life, and Hilpah might wait for Zilpah on the mountains with tolerable patience, from Monday to Wednesday sen'night; but for such a poor kind of day-fly as your humble servant, to defer so great a pleasure is grievous. My best and most affectionate compliments attend Mrs. Garrick.

I am, dear madam,

Ever yours,

E. MONTAGU.

Monday.

MESDAMES GARRICK AND MORE,

Most engaged and engaging ladies, will you drink tea with me on Thursday, with a very small party? I think it an age, not a golden age, since I saw you.

Ever most affectionately yours,

E. MONTAGU.

From Mr. John Henderson[1] to Miss More.

1782.

How can I begin a letter to so good a friend with an upbraiding? Yet have you not deserved it? and so deserved it that I cannot withhold it?

You have been my friend. I was happy in the imagination—happier that you were never unlike that delightful image; and might I not have expected from you a freedom which would have blest me with a communication of your sentiments? Would my friend have disliked my buckles, hair, &c. and not have told me? Would she not have attempted to mould me to her mind?—*whose mind*, to have pleased, what a pleasure would it have been! But saying nothing yourself, you have committed the reformation of me to another. Your friend, Miss Adams, pleads your authority for new modelling me, that I may be made like a gentleman: still I stand out. Pardon me that I am loth to submit, at once, even to your authority. Know then that she is so absolute as to allow of none of my reasons, and we have compromised to appeal to you. Whether I should be a man of the world in *dress* and *address*? I am here to plead for myself. Oh! vouchsafe me a favourable answer. I mean favourable to my negative side!

[1] There are few perhaps now in being, who remember this interesting and singular person; but those who do, will discover his features strongly delineated in this letter. He was a phenomenon that during his short stay among us, did nothing but shew what he was capable of doing, had he been as consistent as he was capable.

And what arguments shall I use! Not now of divinity; they are controverted by every doctor. Not of ethics; the casuists will never agree. I will not reason logically. The sophists will deny for disputation's sake. I write to you *now* as my friend. Receive then, an argument which a friend surely cannot resist; Would any friend make another uneasy? No. Not even for the exquisite enjoyment of fellow-suffering, would you pain me? Are you not my friend? then do not command me to be genteel—it will trouble me—It would be easy to bring many other reasons—*but between us this must be most reasonable*—allow it then, I beseech you. But why would it make you uneasy? Because it no way suits me. My personage, qualifications, manners, are of a clean contrary cast; therefore it would make me most foolishly various and inconsistent.

Conceive my person well-drest, my mien well-gestured, my qualifications shewn to the fashionable world, my manners exercised in polite company, and you conceive contrasts far odder than ought now to belong to me; and something too ridiculous to be owned *by you*. But farther, my turn of thinking is widely different from *that* essentially necessary to *support* such a character with propriety and spirit; what is worse, my taste is offended by most things in the fashion: nor can it ever conform. If, through the changes of the fashions, it may perhaps sometimes happen, that something may become fashionable which I can like, it will soon be unfashionable again. Above

all, my feelings are inconsistent with such a life. I relish worldly company too little—and worldly things. My heart-strings have heretofore twined on earthly things—they have been torn away. Now the strings can hold no more,—like the vine, whose tendrils were broken by the storm that beat it down from its support, they stretch not for another—*only friendship* remains in my fond clasp; *that too* has been too often separated from me, yet I fondly clasp it still. But what has friendship to do with this affair? Only that your friendship may release me from this cruel bondage.

N. B. I do nothing for singularity. I always avoid it as far as I can without hurting my peace. You see then my reason—it is a most serious one. It is with me insuperable.

We expect your answer. Do favour me. Decide soon, and kindly. Can you wish to make my life painful? Whether you can or not, I most heartily pray that you may ever enjoy uninterrupted ease of body; and in your excellent mind, (which is above the world) a peace, which the world cannot give or take away.

JOHN HENDERSON.

Be pleased to present my very friendly respects to each of your sisters.

I earnestly entreat Patty to take my part strenuously; if your heart can want an advocate for persuading it to give me lasting ease.

I know she is on my side, and are not you too? I hope so. I most wishfully hope it!

Fare always well.

From Mrs. Kennicott to Miss H. More.

1782.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Just as I received your letter, we were setting out for Dr. Kennicott's living in Cornwall, and while we were there, we pleased ourselves with the hope of seeing you as we came back; but the parliament was dissolved, and our schemes were dissolved with it.

A thousand thanks to you for the heartiness with which you rejoice in our joy. Dr. Kennicott finished his Bible the end of July. I wish you had been at the jubilee we held at the conclusion of it; for Miss Adams and I displayed so much genius upon the occasion, that I verily believe you could not have helped celebrating it. Our Pembroke friends are just returned, and if they knew I was writing, would send some civil things.

I would not have you for the future make yourself so sure of my not exposing such of your opinions, as you are pleased to say many of your correspondents would style *methodistical*;—a bugbear word, very ingeniously introduced, to frighten people from expressing those sentiments which they ought both to cherish and avow. You will, I hope, always find yourself greatly superior to such fears; for I consider those persons as having the happy power of doing the most essential service to the cause of religion, who, with taste to enjoy all the pleasures of this world, ever appear to hold it

in due subordination to the next; and who, with talent to admire the wit of profane learning, manifest upon all proper occasions, that sacred studies form their chief delight.

I long to see all the fine things you have made. How unequally are talents distributed in this world! That you should be able to write such verses, knit such stockings, and make such aprons! I envy you only for the two last, which would be much more useful accomplishments to me than to you.

Our good Dean[1] is as difficult of access as the Grand Seignior, unless his friends are sick, or in distress, or the young men want his advice, and then his time seems to be at the service of every one who can be benefited by it. Give my best love to Mrs. Garrick.

Your's in all gratitude and affection.

A. KENNICOTT.

[1] Dr. Jackson, Dean of Christchurch.

CHAPTER III.

MISS HANNAH MORE quitted Mrs. Garrick's in the June of this year, 1782, and paid a visit to Dr. and Mrs. Kennicott at Oxford in her way to Bristol. We will extract two or three paragraphs of the letters she wrote from thence.

Oxford, June 13, 1782.

Who do you think is my principal Cicerone at Oxford? Only Dr. Johnson! and we do so gallant it about! You cannot imagine with what delight he showed me every part of his own College (Pembroke) nor how rejoiced Henderson looked, to make one in the party. Dr. Adams, the master of Pembroke, had contrived a very pretty piece of gallantry. We spent the day and evening at his house. After dinner Johnson begged to conduct me to see the College, he would let no one show it me but himself,—'This was my room; this Shenstone's.'—Then after pointing out all the rooms of the poets who had been of his college, 'In short,' said he, 'we were a nest of singing-birds.'—'Here

we walked, there we played at cricket.' He ran over with pleasure the history of the juvenile days he passed there. When he came into the common room, we spied a fine large print of Johnson, framed and hung up that very morning, with this motto; '*And is not Johnson ours, himself a host.*' Under which stared you in the face, 'From *Miss More's* '*Sensibility*,' This little incident amused us;—but alas! Johnson looks very ill indeed—spiritless and wan. However, he made an effort to be cheerful, and I exerted myself much to make him so.

Oxford, 1782.

We are just setting off to spend a day or two at the Bishop of Llandaff's,[1] near Wallingford. But first I must tell you I am engaged to dine on my return with the learned Dr. Edwards of Jesus College, to meet Dr. Johnson, Thomas Warton, and whatever else is most learned and famous in this university.

Oxford, Friday.

We had a delectable visit at the Bishop's. It is a paradise, and they are meet inhabitants for it. I have hardly time to say a word, we have such an inundation of company. There are in the next room three Canons, three *Heads*, three Ladies, one Dean, one Student, and *one* Professor. I got your letter with those of the French Academicians enclosed. So I am to send them the history of my life! *I think I had better cut it out of the*

[1] Dr. Barrington.

European Magazine, or get Mrs.——to write it; in their hands all my sins will make a flaming figure.[1]

It was on her return from this visit at Dr. Kennicott's, that she wrote the humorous epistle to her late hostess, which I have ventured to introduce, as a satire on a practice which at that time had begun to prevail,—having been in a great measure introduced by the black letter, or Chattertonian controversy,—of writing books, the bulk of which consisted of notes, with only a line or two of text at the top of each page. The appellations on which this mock etymological investigation was founded allude to a little playful whim which chanced to occur in their hours of complete relaxation at Dr. Kennicott's. What gave rise to the joke it is as impossible as it is immaterial to explain; but the party, it seems, had each adopted the name of some animal: Dr. K. was the elephant; Mrs. K. dromedary; Miss Adams, antelope; and Miss More, rhinoceros. We are not concerned to establish the wisdom of this proceeding, but let those only charge her with folly who, having purchased an equal right to trifle, have less frequently abused the privilege.

[1] That the reader may understand the allusion in the above letter, it is necessary to inform him that a few months before, the Academy of Arts, Sciences, and Belles Letters at Rouen, had done our authoress the honour of electing her one of their members. She kept up an occasional correspondence with this academy till near the time of the French Revolution.

Hampton, Dec. 24, 1782.

DEAR DROMY,[1]

Pray send word if *Ante*[2] is come, and also how *Ele*[3] does, to your very affectionate

RHYNEY.[4]

Notes on the above epistle, by a commentator of the latter end of the nineteenth century.

This epistle is all that is come down to us of this voluminous author, and is probably the only thing she ever wrote that was worth preserving, or which might reasonably expect to reach posterity. Her name is only presented to us in some beautiful hendecasyllables written by the best Latin poet of his time.—(*Bishop Lowth.*)

Note [1]

Dromy.—From the termination of this address, it seems to have been written to a woman, though there is no internal evidence to support this hypothesis. The best critics are much puzzled about the orthography of this abbreviation. Wartonius, and other skilful etymologists, contend that it ought to be spelt *Drummy*, being addressed to a lady who was probably fond of warlike instruments, and who had a singular predilection for a *canon*.[1] Drummy, say they, was a tender diminutive of drum, as the best authors in their more familiar writings now begin to use *gunny* for *gun*. But *Hurdius*, a contemporary

[1] Dr. Kennicott, Canon of Christ Church.

critic, contends with more probability that it ought to be written *Drome*, from Hippodrome: a learned leech[1] and elegant bard of Bath, having left it upon record that this lady spent much of her time at the riding school, being a very exquisite judge of horsemanship. *Colmanus* and *Horatius Strawberry-ensis* insist that it ought to be written *Dromo*, in reference to the Dromo Lorarius of the latin dramatist.

Note[2]

Ante.—Scaliger 3d says, this name simply signifies the appellation of uncle's wife, and ought to be written *Aunte*. But here again are various readings. Philologists of yet greater name affirm that it was meant to designate *pre-eminence*, and therefore ought to be written *ante*, before, from the Latin; a language now pretty well forgotten, though the authors who wrote in it are still preserved in French translations. The younger Madame Dacier insists that this lady was against all men, and that it ought to be spelt *anti:* but this Kennicottus, a Rabbi of recondite learning, with much critical wrath vehemently contradicts; affirming it to have been impossible she could have been against all mankind, whom all mankind admired. He adds that *ante* is for *antelope*, and is emblematically used to express an elegant and slender animal; or that it is an elongation of *ant*, the emblem of virtuous citizenship.

[1] Dr. Harrington.

Note[3]

Ele.—Here criticicism is confounded, and etymology is swallowed up in the boundless ocean of conjecture. Some have pretended that it should be written E. L. A. which are the initials of *elegant* and *learned antiquary*. The following flight of an hardy imagination is proposed: the profound mythologist[1] (of whom a great female critic has said, 'That he was born in all ages and lived in all countries,') has proved that the poems of Rowley were really *ancient*; the slashing *Tyrwhittius* has proved with equal certainty that they are *modern*; while a *right lernede clerke*[2] has no less demonstrably proved that they were not *written at all*. These opposite opinions seem all as clear as any proposition in Euclid; yet as the principal of these poems is called the tragedy of *Ella*, may not the *Ele* mentioned in this epistle be, by a small corruption, the famous *Ella*, Governor of Bristol Castle? and so here comes in a fourth hypothesis, that he himself was indubitably the author of these controverted poems.

Note[4]

Rhyney.—Or as some read it Rhyny. This is doubtless the name of the author of this admired and valuable epistle, which has afforded such rich materials to modern criticism: yet there are not wanting those who controvert this plain fact. Some refer this name to the geographical relation between the author and the place of her birth, and conclude

[1] Mr. Bryant. [2] Dr. Heberden.

that she was born on the banks of the Rhine; a bold and happy metonymy; as we say, Ithacus, and the Pylian, for Ulysses and Nestor. Her having been in the house of a very amiable German, at the time of her writing this famous epistle, confirms this opinion. Others who assert that in her youth she had been addicted to poetry, think with more reason that *Rhyny* may be derived from *Rhyno*, an old provincial term for money, there having been in all ages a beautiful antithesis between *poetry* and *pence*.

She went to Bristol as usual, and returned in the latter end of the year to Mrs. Garrick and Hampton.

Hampton, Dec. 1782.

Never was such delicious weather! I passed two hours in the garden the other day as if it had been April, with my friend Mr. Brown.[1] I took a very agreeable lecture from him in his art, and he promised to give me taste by innoculation. He illustrates every thing he says about gardening by some literary or grammatical allusion. He told me he compared his art to literary composition. Now *there*, said he, pointing his finger, I make a comma, and there pointing to another spot where a more decided turn is proper, I make a colon: at another part (where an interruption is desirable to break the view) a parenthesis—now a full stop, and then I begin another subject.

[1] Capability Brown.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Bath, 1782.

DEAR MADAM,

The only water drinkers of any use, importance, or merit in human life are your drinkers of Helicon. We who take our morning's draught at the Bath Pump, Tunbridge Wells, &c. &c. are condemned to idle sauntering, What may be *necessary* for an invalid, becomes a general mode ; and rosy health, and youth, and strength, adopt our regimen ; so that Bath is as much dedicated to the Syren idleness, as ever Paphos was to the Cyprian goddess. Sauntering Jack and idle Joan are the Bath characters ; and the few moments an invalid might read or write are continually interrupted by visitants. Thus my dear madam, have I been prevented from making my acknowledgments for some most valuable presents I received from Dr. Stonehouse. I am afraid we are generally more intent on enjoying a benefit, than on showing our gratitude for it; which is usually a crime, but in the present case it was a virtue, so far as I dedicated the first hours I could command to reading the excellent pieces he sent me. I must intreat you to send me the doctor's direction. I cannot express to you the delight I enjoyed the day I spent with you all at Bristol. I have talked of nothing else; and I had this morning a letter from Mrs. Carter from Deal, congratulating me upon it, for I wrote her an account of it. If it were possible to feel any addition to my mortification at not

having your company here, it would be the not enjoying that of the friend,[1] of great extent of genius, and small dimensions of person, whom you so happily describe. I am of your opinion, that idleness is criminal in men of parts; but there are certain desultory geniuses which, like the bird of paradise, are destined to flutter in every region, and abide in none. They are pretty birds to be sure, but not so useful as the barn-door fowl, who get their food in the farm-yard, and leave an egg every day in return; the others only drop now and then a fine feather from their glittering wing, and plumy crest, which perhaps are picked up by the sedulous collector, and adorn his fancy-works.

My friend Mrs. Vesey set forward towards Ireland the day before I left town. It is always disagreeable to part with a friend who is going to any distance, but when the roaring ocean, the boisterous main intervenes, the separation is more solemn. She went off in tolerable spirits, but I think her health much impaired of late. I would fain persuade myself that the voyage and change of air may be of service to her constitution. As to Mr. —— he is so old and so young, so infirm and so strong, I know not what judgment to form of him. One day in a sick-bed, the next at the Opera or Pantheon; one hour in a fit of epilepsy, another in a fit of gallantry! A *cheerful* old age is a fine thing, a *gay* old age a very absurd one. However, it is the ton of the times to confound all distinction of age, sex, and rank; no one ever

[1] John Henderson.

thinks of sustaining a certain character, unless it is one they have assumed at a masquerade.

I am charmed and I hope improved by Dr. Stonehouse's Works: I shall send to London for some of them, in order to diffuse the benefit. I know your goodness to me will make you glad to hear I have been perfectly well ever since I passed the happy day at Bristol. I am ever, my dear madam,

Your most grateful and affectionate
humble servant,
E. MONTAGU.

From H. More to her sister Martha.

Hampton, Jan. 9, 1783.

It was so unusual for me to receive a letter two days following, that when Sally's came on Wednesday, I had so strong a presentiment of its contents, that I did not open it for a long time; but laid it down very deliberately, and went and did several things which I thought too well I should not be able to do after I had read it. Yet, notwithstanding all this preparation, I was just as much shocked at reading it as if I had expected nothing like it.[1] I could not get quite through it for many hours after: and yet there is no cause for grief, but much for joy, much cause to be thankful. And I am *very* thankful that he was spared to us so long—that he was removed when life began to grow a burthen to

[1] The death of her father.

himself—that he did not survive his faculties—that he was not confined to the miseries of a sick bed—but above all, that his life was so exemplary, and his death so easy. I wished I had seen him. Yet that is a vain regret. I hope he did not inquire after me, or miss me. Mrs. Garrick was very much affected, as my father was a very great favourite of hers.

Hampton, Jan. 28, 1783.

Since my dear father's death, I have never yet had resolution to go out of doors, so much as to walk round the garden, in almost three weeks; but as the day is fine, I intend to get out when I have finished this scrawl.

Miss More appears to have remained in her usual deep retirement at Hampton, till March, when she removed with Mrs. Garrick for the spring, to the Adelphi.

London, March.

Another application for an Epitaph. I had rather write an hundred lines on any other subject, than ascribe virtues to people I did not know, or who are undeserving. I cannot do it. Pray give my compliments to all my friends, and tell them I hope none of them will die soon; but in case they should, I wish they would, instead of leaving me any thing, be so good as to insert a passage in their wills, that I am not to be asked to write their Epitaphs. My monumental wit is all disposed of,

and I am sure I never can cobble up enough for another inscription. I mentioned yesterday to Lady Spencer the idea of a print of the Maid of the Haystack. She says, by all means; it may be of great service, at least by keeping up the attention of people. I thought the peace was to put an end to all divisions and disturbances, but I think I never knew this town in such a state of anarchy and distraction. The disputes are not about peace or war, but who shall have power and place, both of which are lost as soon as obtained. Before you can pay your congratulations to your friends on their promotion, presto! pass! they are out again. Lord Falmouth told me he sat down with a most eager appetite to his soup and roast at eight in the morning, and several of the Lords had company to dinner at that hour after the house broke up. Miss Anna Maria Shipley formally presented to me the other day her future husband, Sir William Jones, and we had a great deal of conversation. He is a very amiable as well as learned man, and possesses more languages perhaps than any man in Europe. I send you a few stanzas which I wrote on the death of Lieutenant John Gwatkin, not in the spirit of an epitaph writer, but with honest tears.

I.

Though peace at length her grateful ensign rears,
The muse *will* stain the olive with her tears;
For you the mournful maid sad vigils keeps,
Wives! Sisters! Mothers! 'tis for you she weeps.

II.

For you, in vain shall peace her reign restore;
She comes, but brings your buried joys no more,
Sons! Husbands! Mothers! lo, at one sad stroke,
Poor bleeding nature's softest bands are broke.

III.

Glory and conquest! names of mighty sound!
Where are your lenient balms in sorrow found?
Your beams, when fortune smiles, some joy impart,
But shed weak balsam on a broken heart.

IV.

Shall public honours dignify the brave,
Nor private sorrows fall on Virtue's grave?
Oh, gallant Youth! at thy lov'd memory fired,
The Muse laments that valour she admired.

V.

Though Glory bade thy bright Ambition rise,
Fond nature held thee in her tend'rest ties,
Each mild affection of the soul to prove,
Of filial feeling, and fraternal love.

VI.

While patriot zeal thy ardent bosom warmed,
The gentler arts of peace thy breast informed;
Tho' dauntless courage fix'd thy youthful mind,
Yet lettered elegance thy soul refined.

VII.

Tho' short thy period, glorious was thy race!
How fair a promise crowned that narrow space!
Oh! much lamented youth, be this thy praise,—
Who lives to virtue lives a length of days.

VIII.

Still let domestic anguish bear in mind,
Who dies with honour fills the task assigned.
Where short the span, designs for deeds shall tell,
And duties unperformed the account shall swell!

London, March 7, 1783.

I was yesterday at Mrs. Ord's, to start upon my career of friendship with Mr. Smelt. I inclose part of his letter to her, in which you will see that I have the honour to be in favour with this very exalted character. You know he was preceptor to the Prince of Wales, under the direction of the Earl of Holderness, and as he would receive no settled appointment, he is distinguished by the high appellation of the King's friend. We had a pleasant interesting evening. I have known him for some years: he is an old acquaintance, but a new friend. Her party was small, as it was made on purpose to bring us together. I had Sir Joshua, Cambridge, and Mr. Smelt, all to myself; not badly off, you will say. On Friday evening, I was at a very fine party at Lady Rothes, where I found a vast many of my friends,—Mrs. Montagu, Boscawen, Carter, Thrale, Burney, and Lady Dartrey; in short, it was remarked that there was not a woman in London, who has been distinguished for taste and literature, that was absent. The men were modest, and said they were abashed, the other sex made so strong a party.

I refused to go to-night with Lady Middleton and Mrs. Porteus, to hear Tessier read: for even if I had the least appetite for anything of that sort, I should certainly prefer being drawn into the stream, and going to see Mrs. Siddons, which I have also refused to do, though Lady Spencer took the pains to come yesterday to ask me to go with

her. You know I have long withdrawn myself from the theatre. Lady Bathurst came by appointment, and made a very long and kind visit; she was quite happy, in hourly expectation of Lord Apsley, after a two years' absence in Germany and France. We dined the other day at Mrs. Montagu's. Out of sixteen persons, there were not three English men or women. De Luc, the Swiss metaphysician and geologist, a man of great merit, and Madame la Fite, were all the foreigners I knew; but, my good stars placed Mr. Locke on one side of me; which was some consolation for having a prate-apace jack-anapes of a Frenchman (a *bel esprit* though,) on the other. Mr. Locke never speaks but to instruct, in matters of taste, especially in the fine arts. In the evening we had a very strong reinforcement of blues. Mrs. Montagu inquires after you all.

London, 1783.

Did you hear of a woman of quality, an Earl's daughter, perishing for want the other day near Cavendish Square? The sad story is, that she had married an attorney, a bad man, and had several children; they all frequently experienced the want of a morsel of bread. Lady Jane grew extremely ill, and faint with hunger. An old nurse, who had never forsaken her mistress in her misfortunes, procured by some means a sixpence; Lady Jane sent her out to buy a cow-heel; the nurse brought it in, and carried a piece of it to her mistress: "No," said she, "I feel myself dying—all relief is too late; and it would be cruel in me to rob the children of a

morsel, by wasting it on one who must die,"—so saying, she expired. I leave you to make your own comments on this domestic tragedy, in a metropolis drowned in luxury. What will Sally say to side dishes and third courses now?

Yesterday we dined at the Bishop of Salisbury's.[1] Dr. Heberden, Dr. and Mrs. Kennicott, Mythology Bryant, and Mrs. Carter. With Mr. Bryant I always have some delightful conversation; he is not only a very able, but a pious man, and has devoted his Pagan learning to truly Christian purposes. I spent the afternoon on Tuesday with Mrs. Delany and the Duchess of Portland. I think that charming duchess very much broken in her looks; and she is not likely to be cured by her son's being appointed premier to this distracted country. His ministry, I suppose, will be still shorter than his vice-royalty was. These labours and vicissitudes are the blessings of greatness. Even riches do not make rich. I should be glad to know what our friend Dr. Stonehouse would think of such new-fashioned doctrines as I have lately heard in a Charity Sermon on a Sunday, from a dignified ecclesiastic, and a popular one too, but I will not tell his name: he told the rich and great, that they ought to be extremely liberal in their charities, because they were happily *exempted* from the *severer virtues*. How do you like such a sentiment from a Christian teacher? What do you think Polycarp or Ignatius would say to it?

[1] Dr. Barrington.

London, March 29, 1783.

I spent an evening lately with Lady Charlotte Wentworth. She had a very select little party, and they made me read to them;—poetry too! I defended myself as well as I could, but to my great regret, was forced to comply. Lady Charlotte has a great deal of general literature; and, what is far better, she is really a pious and well-informed Christian. Sunday I breakfasted at Sir Charles Middleton's, and we went with the Bishop of Chester afterwards, and heard him preach a solemn resurrection sermon. They set me down as usual after church.

I thought Mrs. Garrick would have dropped with laughing, when I read in Sally's letters that you spent all your leisure in teaching the *governesses* to read and spell. It struck her fancy mightily. I am glad to hear such good tidings of Henderson. I hope he will begin to put his great parts to good use, and avoid the condemnation as well of the *buried*, as of the abused talent. I passed the whole evening at the Bishop of St. Asaph's in a very pleasant wrangle with Mr. Walpole about poets: he abusing all my favourites, and I all his: he reprobating Akenside, Thomson, and all my bards of the *blank song;* and I all his odes and lyrics. I told him (rather lightly I fear) that David had expressed my notion of the obscurity of lyric poetry, when he said, "I will utter my dark speech upon the harp." Sir William Jones (for the new judge is also knighted previous to his Indian voyage,) is gone down to prepare all things for his and his lady's

accommodation. She is a little low at the thoughts that she is leaving all, perhaps for ever; but she goes with what she best loves,—an advantage with which few women set out to India. They are to be married in a few days. We are to have one more evening together.

Hoole has just sent me his preface to his translation of Ariosto, which is coming out; an expensive present; since I can now do no less than subscribe for the whole work; and a guinea and a half for a translation of a book is dearish. Saturday I went to Mrs. Reynolds's, to meet Sir Joshua and Dr. Johnson: the latter is vastly recovered. Our conversation ran very much upon religious opinions, chiefly those of the Roman Catholics. He took the part of the Jesuits, and I declared myself a Jansenist. He was very angry because I quoted Boileau's bon mot upon the Jesuits, that they had lengthened the creed and shortened the decalogue; but I continued sturdily to vindicate my old friends of the Port Royal. On Tuesday I was at Mrs. Vesey's assembly, which was too full to be very pleasant. She dearly loves company; and as she is connected with almost every thing that is great in the good sense of the word, she is always sure to have too much. I inquired after the Shipleys, who had promised to meet us there, and was told they had just sent an excuse; for that Anna Maria and Sir William were at that moment in the act of marrying. They will be now completely banished, but as they will be banished together, they do not think it a hardship. May God

bless them, and may his stupendous learning be sanctified! I went and sat the other morning with Dr. Johnson, who is still far from well. Our conversation was very interesting; but so many people came in, that I began to feel foolish, and so I sneaked off. He has written some very pretty verses on his friend Levett, which he gave me, and which I will send you when I can. He was all kindness to me.

London, April 5, 1783.

On Saturday I dined at Apsley House, where there was a good deal of company. Lord Apsley has brought with him all the benefit to be derived from travelling; and has more vivacity and spirit than falls to the share of our modern young men of quality in general. Lord Bathurst entertained me a good deal, apart after dinner, with anecdotes of his godfather Lord Bolingbroke, of Pope, his own father, and others; which, as they fell under his own eye, perhaps I could have learned from no other man living. He entirely exculpates Pope from any evil intention in printing the Patriot King; which excited Bolingbroke's hatred so much after Pope's death: though I do still think it was a very unaccountable step.

I received your letter on Wednesday. I stole that day out of the fire as I may say, and staid at home, maugre several invitations. I had really dined out such a vast number of days, that I was quite weary, and was inflexible to all intreaty; indeed so much visiting does now begin to be very

irksome, for I go to many places when I should rejoice to stay at home; but I consider that this round of visiting will not last long; for I begin to calculate that there is little more than a clear month between this and June.

London, May 5, 1783.

I went yesterday to hear the Bishop of Chester. That good man is under great affliction for the death of Dr. Stinton, his dearest friend through life. In the sermon there happened to be a passage which, among other losses, mentioned the death of a beloved companion; he was so much affected that his voice faltered, and he could not go on without the greatest difficulty. As most of the audience knew the circumstance, they were very much touched at it. Poor Ryland! from the time he absconded till he was apprehended, he continually sat with a razor in a prayer-book. Think what a state of mind, to have just convictions and faith enough to pray, and yet to be so desperately wretched, as to live with the instrument of self-murder continually in his hand. His bane and antidote were not so comfortable to him as Cato's were, for he had the misfortune to know better and to believe more.

Is it not very melancholy when you go to see our solitary mother? I endeavour to think of it as little as I can, but in spite of my endeavours it mixes with all my thoughts. Saturday we had a dinner at home, Mrs. Carter, Miss Hamilton, the Kennicotts, and Dr. Johnson. Poor Johnson exerted himself exceedingly; but he was very ill and looked so

dreadfully, that it quite grieved me. He is more mild and complacent than he used to be. His sickness seems to have softened his mind, without having at all weakened it. I was struck with the mild radiance of this setting sun. We had but a small party of such of his friends as we knew would be most agreeable to him, and as we were all very attentive, and paid him the homage he both expects and deserves, he was very communicative, and of course instructive and delightful in the highest degree.

London, May, 1783.

I dined one day last week in Dudley Street,[1] to celebrate the Viscount's[2] birthday, who completed his twenty-fifth year. His mother told him she wanted to have him married, and advised him to fall in love: he said he should if he were with any young ladies in the country; but that he never could in London, for the women did not stand still long enough for a man to fall in love with them. The other day I divided between Lady Bathurst and Lady Charlotte Wentworth. The latter gave me a little packet she had just received from Madame le Cat, directed for me; it contained a pretty French snuff-box, on which is the tomb of Rousseau, in the isle of Poplars. I was invited last week to six or eight dinners or assemblies, but did not go to any of them. I intended to have sent this away last night, but Mr. Cambridge came in at tea, and sat gossipping and being agreeable till twelve; and I

[1] Mrs. Boscawen's. [2] Viscount Falmouth.

was so full of dactyls and spondees, that I quite forgot my letter. I was asked to meet the chemical and polemical Bishop Watson to-day at Mr. Cole's, but was engaged elsewhere.

The King and Queen have suffered infinitely from the loss of the sweet little prince, who was the darling of their hearts. I was charmed with an expression of the king's. 'Many people (said he) would regret they ever *had* so *sweet* a child, since they were forced to part with him: that is not my case. I am thankful to God for having graciously allowed me to enjoy such a creature for four years.' Yet his sorrow was very great.

London, May, 22, 1783.

I have finished my campaign in town: we do not now appear to anybody unless we meet them strolling in the streets. We dined one day last week at Mrs. Bannister's, to meet the Bishop of Winchester and Mrs. North; there was a great deal of other company, among whom was Mr. Swinburne, the author of 'Travels to Spain, Sicily,' &c. One is always surprised to find the author of two or three great big burly quartos, a *little* genteel young man. He is modest and agreeable, not wise and heavy, like his books. The next morning I breakfasted with the Bishop of Chester and Mrs. Porteus, and we visited the tombs, and dwelt among the dust in Westminster Abbey. On Saturday, I wound up my town adventures, by dining and passing the evening with Mrs. Boscawen and a little snug party, consisting of the above-said bishop, the

Coles, and the Duchess of Beaufort. Since that time I have been inexorable to all invitations, though two rival parties were strongly pressed upon me last night; one at Mr. Soame Jenyns's, and the other to meet the Barrington's, at Bishop Porteus's. There was no way of getting off either, but by refusing both.

A visitor has just gone away quite chagrined that I am such a rigid Methodist, that I cannot come to her assembly on Sunday, though she protests with great piety, that she *never has cards*, and that it is quite savage in me to think there can be any harm in a little agreeable music.

From Bishop Porteus to Miss H. More.

London, May, 23. 1783.

DEAR MADAM,

It sounds, I confess, very wicked and ill-natured to say that I am very glad you were so ingenious in tormenting yourself with the idea of a supposed transgression; but the truth is, I really am so. For although there certainly could not be much reason for giving yourself the smallest uneasiness, on account of an offence which you never committed, yet to that fortunate uneasiness I am indebted for a most obliging and agreeable note, to which otherwise I could have had no claim.

Be assured, that I set the highest value on this, and every other mark of your regard, and that it is with the greatest pleasure I obey your commands, in giving you this assurance under my own hand,

which though it can send you nothing but a miserable scrawl, written in the midst of hurry and perpetual interruptions, yet has the merit of conveying to you in these plain homely characters, nothing but plain homely truth. I should, perhaps, have been able to dress what I had to say in a better garb, had I waited, as you allowed me to do, till I was in the country, and quiet, and at leisure. But when, alas! will this be? Will it ever happen (says your parenthesis) on this side heaven? Those comforts are, I confess, the wish, the almost only secular and ardent wish, of my heart. But it is not always fit that secular wishes should be gratified: it is, perhaps, the will of heaven that mine should not, and that labour and business should be the destiny of my whole life. If Providence has thus decreed, I submit, as I ought to do, with cheerfulness, and am truly thankful for the many other blessings I already enjoy. Among these, I give the first place to the affection and esteem of many excellent persons whom I have the happiness to call my friends. If in this number I may be allowed to rank Miss Hannah More, it will contribute not a little to lighten my approaching fatigue; and wherever I am, whether on the mountains of Cumberland, on the lakes of Lancashire, or at Chester, at London, or at Hunton, it will always be matter of triumph and of consolation to me that I am permitted to subscribe myself

Your most faithful and obedient servant,

B. CHESTER.

From Hannah More to her Sister.

Hampton, May 29, 1783.

We have been at Hampton near a week. I am here to-night by myself. Mrs. Garrick is gone to town. I begged to stay behind, both because I have a great deal of business to do, and because I hate London when I have nothing to do, and nobody to see there; and having taken my leave once, I do not like to begin again. Before I left London, I spent a whole morning with Mrs. Delany. She gave me a great treat—the reading of all Dean Swift's letters, written to herself. She likewise gave me my choice of one to bring away for your book of autographs. I had the modesty to choose the shortest, and she had the modesty to oppose it, because there was so much to her praise in it; but if that were to be an objection, there would not be one for my purpose.

Did I tell you that the Bishop of Chester's Sermons were out of print in eight days? I hope the age is not so bad as we took it to be; and yet it cannot be very good neither, when the strawberries at Lady Stormont's breakfast last Saturday morning cost one hundred and fifty pounds.

I am tired of writing several letters, and of reading the Lives of the Reformers, and of trimming a fine gauze handkerchief; and now I am going to close the day with a thick quarto of Dr. Beattie's metaphysics.

To her Sister.

Hampton, 1783.

As I do not go to Ranelagh, nor the play, nor the opera, nor sup at Charles Fox's, nor play at Brooke's, nor bet at Newmarket, I have not seen that worthy branch of the house of Bourbon, the Duke de Chartres. I never heard of such a low, vulgar, vicious fellow. His character is—

Poltron sur mer,
Escroc sur terre,
Et vaut rien partout.

I have read Colman's 'Ars Poetica:' he is much too negligent a versifier, but easy and elegant. I believe I forgot to mention Mrs. Vesey's pleasant Tuesday parties to you. It is a select society, which meets at her house every other Tuesday, and of which I am invited to be an unworthy member. It assembles on the day on which the Turk's Head Club dine together. In the evening they all meet at Mrs. Vesey's, with the addition of such other company as it is difficult to find elsewhere. Last Tuesday we met; and Mr. Langton and Mr. Walpole were added to the society, for the first time this winter. I rejoiced to find them again, for they are two of the very pleasantest men 'that e'er my conversation coped withal.' The latter told me a hundred pleasant stories of his father and the *then* court.

Alas! when will the distractions of this land be

healed! Nothing but a national judgment can bring us to our senses. Surely the miseries which have visited the devoted Calabrians might open our eyes, and show us all that our evils are chiefly imaginary, or of our own bringing on. War, gambling, and luxury are none of them inflictions from heaven.

An arrangement of the ministry seems to be as far off as ever, and I am tired of writing, hearing, and undesignedly circulating untruths on this undecided subject. The news that was true at the beginning of one's page, proves false before one has reached the bottom, and one can hardly catch, ere it falls, the arrangement of the minute.

I wish you could see Hampton at this moment; I think there never was greater perfection of beauty; so clean, so green, so flowery, so bowery! We dined the other day at Strawberry Hill, and passed as delightful a day, as elegant literature, high breeding, and lively wit can afford. As I was the greatest stranger, Mr. Walpole devoted himself to my amusement with great politeness, but I have so little of virtû and antiquarianism about me that I really felt myself quite unworthy of all the trouble he took for me.

Very shortly after Miss H. More's return to Bristol, in June, 1783, she received a summons from her friend Mrs. Kennicott, at Oxford, who was anxious for her assistance and consolation under the very afflicting event of Dr. Kennicott's being attacked with a dangerous illness.

To her Sister.

Oxford, August 19, 1783.

My last will have prepared you to expect the contents of this letter. Dear Dr. Kennicott expired yesterday, about four o'clock in the afternoon. I saw him breathe his last. The servants, though there were six of them, were afraid to stay in the room without me. I got her away from him down stairs, and for the last two hours ran continually up and down, from the afflicted wife to the expiring husband, she all the time knowing he was in the last agonies. Yet, when I came to break it to her, she bore it with the utmost fortitude. She has been very composed ever since, indeed she is a true Christian heroine. The Dean of Christchurch has just been to say that in a quarter of an hour the great bell is to toll. I have told her of it, and she is now looking out a book for me to read during that time.

Adieu. I hear the bell—my task begins.[1]

Oxford, August 23, 1783.

My excellent friend was buried on Thursday afternoon, in Christchurch, close to Bishop Ber-

[1] Mrs. Hannah More used to repeat, from her friend, Mrs. Kennicott, a little anecdote of Dr. Kennicott, which strikingly proves how much the love of the sacred volume grows with its perusal. During the time that he was employed on his Polyglot Bible, it was her constant office, in their daily airings, to read to him those different portions to which his immediate attention was called. When preparing for their ride, the day after this great work was completed, upon her asking him what book she should now take, 'Oh,' exclaimed he, 'let us begin the Bible.'

keley. Mrs. Kennicott made it a point that I should go to see this last sad office performed. I objected to leaving her alone for so long a time, but her strength of mind overruled this objection. The choir service was awful, almost beyond bearing: and the dean[1] read the prayers in a manner most solemn and impressive. I shall stay while I have any chance of being useful to the afflicted widow. Thus closed a life, the last thirty years of which were honourably spent in collating the Hebrew Scriptures. One now remembers, with peculiar pleasure, that, among other disinterested actions, he resigned a valuable living, because his learned occupation would not allow him to reside upon it.

What substantial comfort and satisfaction must not the testimony which our departed friend was enabled to bear to the truth of the Holy Scriptures, afford to those who lean upon them as the only anchor of the soul. When Dr. K. had an audience of the king to present his work, his majesty asked him, What upon the whole had been the result of his laborious and learned investigation? To which he replied, that he had found some grammatical errors, and many variations, in the different texts; but not one which, in the smallest degree, affected any article of faith or practice. When I retired to my chamber, I drew up a hasty, but faithful sketch of the character of my departed friend, while it was fresh in my recollection, which I enclose.

[1] Dr. Jackson.

A HASTY SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER OF DR. KENNICOTT.

Of his acknowledged learning I shall say nothing, for obvious reasons; for to appreciate the learning of *others*, it is necessary to possess no inconsiderable portion of it *oneself*; 'what light is, 'tis only light can shew.' But I have heard the best judges say, that his Critical Researches were original, sagacious, and acute; and that he considerably enriched the treasury of sacred literature. He had a clear, strong, distinguishing mind, and so great a precision in his own ideas, that he made himself intelligible to common apprehensions, on subjects which they hardly expected to understand. He sanctified his talents by a noble application of them to the best of purposes—the elucidation of those divine writings which were the invariable rule of his faith and practice. He tempered the most ardent zeal for his own opinions, with the mildest charity for those of other men. Nothing could exclude any human being from his heart but vice or infidelity; and even those could not shut them out from his pity and his prayers. As every virtue is defective unless the opposite one is possessed in an equal degree, so the liveliness of his zeal can never be considered in so instructive a light, as when contrasted with his constancy and his perseverance. His friendships were as animated, as his resentments were placable. The most distinguished persons of the age were his friends and associates;

but his particular attachments were to those who to great talents added great virtues. He was scrupulously conscientious, and disinterested almost to imprudence. The most minute exactness, the strictest love of order, and the closest habits of accuracy, distinguished the smaller, no less than the greater parts of his life. Pain could not subdue his patience, nor prosperity weaken his principles. He had a genuine simplicity of manners, which, flowing from a sweet temper and an excellent heart, sat infinitely better upon *him*, than the artificial refinements of what is called good-breeding would have done. The severe studies and the intense sufferings which almost divided his life between them, could never eclipse the gaiety of his temper, or shade the mirthful cast of his mind.

As nothing catches such strong hold of the affections as the small parts of great characters, so, while I am now writing, a thousand sayings of harmless pleasantry, and scenes of innocent cheerfulness, fill my heart with recollections so softening, as to overpower those greater circumstances which would at this moment occupy the minds of wiser and better persons. He had a just sense of the value of his literary labours; but he was *vain* only of his wife; she was the object not only of his *affection* but of his *pride;* and he loved her as much from *taste* as from *tenderness*. She was to him hands and feet, and eyes, and ears, and intellect. If any ingenious thing was said in company, he never perfectly relished it till she related it to him:

'His Anna, the relater, he preferred,
Before an angel.'

There are certain ladies, who, merely from being faithful or frugal, are reckoned excellent wives: and who, indeed, make a man every thing but *happy*. They acquit themselves, perhaps of the great points of duty; but in so ungracious a way, as clearly proves that they do not find their pleasure in it. Lest their account of merit should run too high, they allow themselves to be unpleasant in proportion as they are useful; not considering that it is almost the worst sort of domestic immorality to be *disagreeable*. This is not the case with this lady; she probably lengthened her husband's life by her attentions, and certainly gladdened it by her prudence, her understanding, and her gentleness. And it is her peculiar praise, that she took the pains to acquire a certain knowledge,[1] from which she derived neither pleasure nor fame, merely to be useful to *him*.

Oxford, August 21, 1783.—This imperfect character of an excellent man, was drawn by one who affectionately esteemed him; who, two days ago, heard from him the *groan which could not be repeated*, and who is just now going to see him deposited in the grave. May the recollection of that awful scene long rescue her heart from the vanity and weakness to which it is too subject!

[1] The Hebrew Language

From Miss H. More to Mrs. E. Carter.

Christ Church, Oxford, 1783.

A thousand thanks, my dear Mrs. Carter, both from Mrs. Kennicott and myself, for your very obliging and friendly inquiries. I did not receive your letter till Friday, and yesterday there was no post, or I should have testified our acknowledgments sooner. We have, indeed, had a most distressful and affecting scene. I have lost a most excellent friend, and poor Mrs. Kennicott the best of husbands. His illness was lingering, but not judged to be hopeless till within a few days before we lost him. I saw him breathe his last; and you, my dear friend, who know my weakness of mind, and the agitation of spirits to which I am subject, will feel for my situation, and for what I endured when I had to convey to her the news of his death; for I had forced her out of the room some hours before. But her fortitude made me ashamed of myself. I never saw courage so great, grounded upon principles so good. She feels the sincerest sorrow, but without any mixture of weakness; and she yields the most lively proof that the divine consolations are, indeed, neither *few nor small.* She is preparing, with the utmost composure, to leave this fine residence, so suitable to her taste and to her regular and orderly mind; for she is formed for the sober dignity of academical life; but she seems quite indifferent to all these outward things; and that part of the change which would occupy the

hearts of some women, she does not even think of. I intend staying with her about another week, soon after which she proposes to leave this place.

I have to thank you, my dear madam, for a delightful letter which I received at Bristol, from whence I was called away hither just as I was about to answer it, and to condole with you on the misfortunes Mr. Carter had sustained. Poor Dr. Wheeler too! but don't you pity the excellent Bishop of London? He sent off an express as soon as his daughter died, to hasten Dr. Wheeler up, to be with and console him: an express from the doctor's sister, to say he was dead, met the bishop's messenger on the road. Such is this world, and so the fashion of it passes away!

We are vastly busy, packing, selling, writing, &c.; and, perhaps, it is good for poor Mrs. Kennicott that she is not allowed a quiet enjoyment of her grief. She desires her kindest compliments to you, and bids me say that she feels very sensibly your goodness to her.

Adieu, my dear madam. I am most faithfully and affectionately yours,

H. More.

From Dr. Horne to Miss H. More.

Ramsgate, 1783.

Madam,

We were truly afflicted on receiving the melancholy intelligence communicated in your favour of the 19th instant, which reached us at this place

last night. That it came unexpectedly I cannot say, as a letter from Mrs. Price had thrown us into a state of awful suspense, and prepared us to hear the worst. Indeed, for some time past, I have not been able to flatter myself with the hope that Dr. Kennicott's life could be of any long duration, as I knew the gentlemen of the faculty looked upon his restoration, brought about last year by the Bath waters, to have been merely temporary, and deemed it impossible that his constitution, strong as it was, could stand against the violent and repeated attacks of disease.

To trouble Mrs. Kennicott with a long letter on the usual topics of consolation, would be doing her very great injustice. Her internal resources are mighty. In the most trying situations of life she has discharged her duties in a manner which has done great honour to her sex, and reflected lustre on her religion. With such a conscience, and the assistance of a friend like yourself, what can happen that she will not be more than equal to? What more can be added, save that which ever will be added—the divine blessing? That it may accompany and direct you both, wherever you go and whatever you do, is the sincere and fervent wish and prayer of Mrs. Horne, and of him who is, with the highest esteem,

Your most faithful
and obedient servant,
G. HORNE.

The following six letters will introduce to the reader one of Miss Hannah More's most interesting, amiable, and intelligent correspondents.

Miss H. More to William W. Pepys, Esq,[1]

Bristol, July 24.

I have been always intending to answer your letter when I could find a handsome occasion; and such an occasion I have now *found* or *made*. *Le voici.*

I have been filling up the vacant hours of my convalescence in scribbling a parcel of idle verses, with which I hope to divert our dear Mrs. Vesey, in her banishment from London. But as I wish to puzzle her (and right easy is the task), I would not send them directly from hence, as the post-mark would have been at once a *coup de lumière*. I have one frank to you, and one to Miss Hamilton, neither of which will hold the *whole*, so I send half to you, and the other half to her by the same post, but I have been wicked enough to divide them in such a manner, that neither part will make sense without the other. *She* is likewise directed not to open *hers* till you call upon her, and I am malicious enough to divert myself with the idea that one or other of you will probably be out of town, and in that case there will be a fine philosophical call on you to suspend your curiosity. The only way I had to secure your honesty, was to put it out of your power to cheat, by making it useless to break open the enclosed till you get to

[1] Afterwards Sir W. W. Pepys.

Miss H. I wish you to read it to *her*; and then to read it to yourself, *critically*, 'with all the malice of a friend.' I wish I could have as firm a reliance on your sincerity as I have upon your taste; but you gave me at Hampton one proof that you *can* be sincere, and here is a fresh demand upon you for *farther* proofs.

After having made such corrections as you see proper, you will send the verses off to Mrs. V. without the smallest intimation from whence they come. At the same time, on another scrap of paper you will mark down for me, what alterations you have made, that I may insert them in my copy. I intended only a few lines, but it grew into length, maugre all my endeavours, as slight and worthless things have a wonderful facility in growing. In vain did I cut off lines in one part; like the heads of the monster, 'one would bourgeon where another fell.' Do not make the least scruple of striking out any improper, or *singularly* flimsy couplet.

I write to Mrs. V. so seldom, and her sight is so indifferent, that I do not think she will recollect my handwriting.

This scrawl, you will allow, contains nearly as much egotism as one of Mr. Maty's Reviews. When you see the scrape you are brought into by that (to you) fatal frankness about the vases at Hampton, you will be apt to regret that *escape* of honesty, for without it you would not have had this torment.

I am in such raptures with *Les Jardins*, by L'Abbé de L'Isle, which I have just read, for the

first time, that I am half tempted to revoke the insolent things I have been saying all my life, against almost all French poetry, except Boileau's. Pray how do you like Les Jardins?

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

Wimpole Street, July 29, 1783.

Very clever, witty, pleasant, and playful; I like it excessively, and have read it over and over again with fresh pleasure. By great good luck your ingenious malice was disappointed, and instead of plaguing us both, you procured us a very great and unexpected pleasure in reading it over together on Monday, in Wimpole Street. I am at a loss to point out what I like best in it, as it is *full* of the best-humoured wit and most elegant compliment; but what made the greatest impression on my fancy was that admirable turn of giving Mrs. Vesey the preference to any philosopher who should *square* the *circle*. I am sure every body will say of that as Lord Mount Edgcumbe said of Mrs. W.'s Epigram, 'That he was sure he had made it himself but had forgotten it.' To prevent the possibility of Mrs. Vesey's knowing the hand, Mrs. Pepys transcribed it, and sent her the copy. Miss Hamilton and I have had a long piece of casuistry together; I say, that as I had no injunction against giving a copy, I see no reason why I might not delight Mrs. Montagu or Mrs. Walsingham, and the chosen few now at Burleigh with a sight of it; but Miss H. has raised in me

fresh scruples of conscience; and, much as I should like to give Mrs. Walsingham and her friends pleasure, I dread so much giving you any cause of complaint, that I have not ventured to do it.

As to suggesting any corrections, I do assure you, in sober sadness, that I am the very worst fellow in the world to apply to; for either I am so delighted with a composition as not to be able, (for a long time at least) to consider it critically, or else I take so little pleasure in it, as not to think it worth the pains of criticism. Which of the two is the case with me at present, I leave you to guess.

We were doubtful whether, as you had mentioned Cato, Hortensius, Catiline, Lentulus, and Roscius, from some resemblance of *character*, not of *name*, whether, I say, the calling him afterwards *Horace*, is quite of a piece with the idea which suggested the other names? But this I mention, rather to give you the most *decisive* proof of my integrity, than for any other reason, because it is a line the whole of which I like best as it stands. Your never-failing gratitude in first mentioning Roscius is delightful, and, added to a *thousand* other traits in it, serve greatly to increase the regard and admiration of your highly honoured and obliged

LÆLIUS.

Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, August 4, 1783.

I never was guilty of over-refinement in my life, but it failed to answer the end. Here is Miss

Hamilton *so* jealous that *she* was forbidden to take a copy, and that no such bargain was made with *you!* I protest I thought I was doing the most delicate thing in the world, in not seeming to imagine you would want one. I acted in conformity to a favourite old couplet of mine,

> Perhaps to be forbid may tempt one
> To wish for what one never dreamt on.

I knew well that Miss H. would eagerly fall on anything in which *rhyme* or *I* was concerned; but that *you* should gravely think of sitting down to copy nineteen pages of nonsense verses, I confess I was too modest to conjecture: and so I have written to Miss H. in answer to her philippic against my supposed partiality.

Your criticisms are perfectly just. We must banish *Horace*. I confess I had been so much in the habit of seeing him and *Lælius* together, that they presented themselves to my mind spontaneously. I desire you will elect a new colleague. What say you to Atticus? A learned, amiable, and tall friend of yours will be no bad representative of him. 'The *urn* of Belvidere,' on revision, I do not like; urn is a pretty word, and its prettiness seduced me; but it does not convey the meaning; it rather gives the idea of a lover weeping over the ashes of a departed mistress. I propose to read it thus:—

> Save when he steals to drop a tear,
> Frequent, o'er sad Calista's bier,
> Or mourn the wrongs of Belvidere.

I do not like triplets though, and would never use them but in very light compositions.

In the third line from the last, for *wisdom* read *genius*. There are several other tautologies which I beg you to correct.

You seemed so resolved to *take* the leave I did not mean to *give*, that I suppose I should now get nothing by withholding it but the heaviest charge of affectation. I am, however, very serious, and very unaffected, when I enjoin you to confine the copies you give to Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Walsingham, with strict injunctions to them not to give them away. I have a terror of newspapers, from which I have found, by sad experience, that no mediocrity can secure one: so no safety even for me.

I do confess I should have been sadly mortified had I been so bad a painter, that you had not known all my Romans. But I dare say, like other artists, I should have comforted myself that the defect was in the eye of the judges, rather than in my own pencil.

The *Guardian* I was so anxious to know your opinion about, is the fortieth of the first volume. I have *some* reason to think I am in the wrong, as I have all the world against me: but the whole criticism appears to me a burlesque. That a writer of so pure a taste could be in earnest, when he talks of the elegance of Diggon Davy, and exalts all that trash of Phillips's, whose simplicity is silliness, I cannot bring myself to believe. But when he says that *Hobbinol* and *Lobbin* are names agreeable to the delicacy of an English ear, *j'y perds mon Latin*.

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

Tunbridge Wells, August 13, 1783.

Thanks for your licence, but a fig for your restrictions; though I certainly shall not transgress them without your leave. But when you must know that not only every reading and writing Miss at Margate has got a copy of them, but that the copies of them are, by this time, dispersed over every part of the kingdom, to all their correspondents, what possible reason could there be to lay me or any of your friends under any restraint? The company in which you placed me did me so much honour, that I am extremely unwilling to part with my colleague; but I agree with you that if I *must* be separated from him, you could not have thought of a better substitute. However I am desirous of keeping *him* if I can, though it should put you to the expense of a triplet, for the sake of hooking them both in. You would have been entertained with Miss Hamilton's eager curiosity to discover who Lælius was. She did not know my passion for good society, (though I think she must have discovered somewhat of it at Hampton) and therefore I had a fine opportunity of teazing her, by telling her that Lælius had had the happiness of conversing with her—was much her admirer, &c. *Atticus* is an admirable name for Langton; both in respect of his moderation and impartiality about political questions, and also because he is, and wishes to be, distinguished for his *Greek* literature: but you must, if you can, make a trio of us.

I have read the poem over twenty times, and really think it a composition of first-rate merit of its kind. As you have quite established your character with me for that most rare indication of a great mind, the hearing, without offence, any line or word pointed out for alteration, I have run the risk of putting down, as it occurred, any thing that in the least struck me as capable of being improved. If you find you begin to dislike me for it, repent of the sensation as soon as you can, and reinstate me in your favour by recollecting the assurance which I gave you, that you are almost the only person with whom I ever have been hardy enough to try the experiment.

If they do not bring dinner I shall never leave off writing, because it puts me so much in mind of *talking* to you; and you recollect that I was not easily tired of *that*. I do not venture to recommend Blair's Lectures, because I have begun only the second volume, and have not made much progress in *that*; but as far as relates to poetry, I think you will be pleased with him; except that after saying, in the second volume, page 254, that in point of poetical fire and original genius, *Milton* and Shakspeare are inferior to no poets in any age; he says, in page 257, that in epic poetry, Homer and Virgil, to this day, stand not within reach by many degrees of any rival. Does not this seem a little like contradiction? At least is it not rather too hard upon Milton?

Adieu, ever yours,

W. W. PEPYS.

From the same to the same.

Tunbridge Wells, September 21, 1783.

Though I am much afraid that I frightened you by the length of my last letter, (for I will not do you so much injustice as to think that I disgusted you by the freedom of my remarks,) yet as our friend Mrs. Boscawen tells me that she is going to write to you in a cover, and offers me a place in it if I have any thing to say, I cannot resist the temptation of thanking you for those exquisitely beautiful lines upon Attention, which you were so good as to send by Miss Hamilton, and which make such an admirable conclusion to the charming 'Bas Bleu:'—

'Mute Angel! yes, thy looks dispense
The silence of intelligence.'

are beyond all praise, and form such a picture, with the addition of the two next lines, that as soon as I see Mrs. Walsingham, I shall request of her to paint Attention from your beautiful design. I have had the greatest success in disseminating your fame among some other good judges, at this place, to whom I have read the 'Bas Bleu' with uncommon effect; and every creature, whose opinion was worth having, has agreed with me in thinking it a performance of very extraordinary merit. Lady D—— is charmed with it; and as she had not seen the lines upon Attention, I thought myself very

fortunate in being the first to communicate them to her.

I am sorry to hear from Mrs. Boscawen that you have of late been engaged in such a melancholy scene at Oxford: but as I begin to take an interest (and that rather a warm one) in whatever you do, I was pleased to hear of your being engaged in one of the most generous, because the most painful acts of friendship. I know a little of Mrs. Kennicott, but had so much regard for her poor brother, that I was very glad to hear that she had the consolation of such a friend in her affliction. Your having been engaged in such scenes, is more than a sufficient reason with me for your not having made use of the cover I had the effrontery to send you. Do tell me all that you can about yourself, though you are the worst person in the world to apply to for that intelligence.

Pray come either to London or near it, before the annual return of the vertigo with which every body is infected after the birthday, and give me an opportunity of telling you as soon as may be, in person, how much

I am yours,

W. W. PEPYS.

From the same to the same.

Tunbridge Wells, October 10, 1783.

Our letters crossed each other on the road, but by no means at equal distance from us, for no sooner had Mrs. Boscawen carried off my letter in her chaise, than I was favoured with your's by one of

those gentlemen who Madame Sevigné observes are so obliging as 'se faire crotter jusqu'aux yeux,' to keep up the intercourse of friends at a distance. I desire you will not take the trouble of transcribing the 'Bas Bleu,' as I promise myself a very pleasant hour or two in looking it over together with you as soon as we can meet; and transcribing must be to you a dreadful task! I wish I knew when to expect you. You lose the most sociable month in London by not coming till after Christmas. Exclusively of the pleasure I have received from the Bas Bleu, you cannot imagine the degree of *consequence* it has given me with some very agreeable people here, and how much I have risen in their estimation by telling them that *I* was the first person who saw it, and that *I* would read it to them, but that no copy of it could be possibly given.

I think it most probable that I shall stay here till the 5th of November, when, alas! I must return to the wrangling of lawyers; and exchange my exhilarating rides, and luxurious reading, for noise and sin, seacoal and parchment; *en attendant*, I feel quite overflowing with gratitude for the happiness I have enjoyed here for ten weeks. My family and self are well, and as yet protected from all those calamities which 'flesh is heir to.' Though I love your letters as the next best thing to your company, yet I do beseech you not to write unless you should happen to be in the humour for it.

Yours ever,

W. W. PEPYS.

From Mrs. Barbauld to Miss H. More.

Palegrove, Nov. 1783.

DEAR MADAM,

If any one were to ask me whether Miss More and Mrs. Barbauld correspond, I should say, we correspond, I hope, in sentiments, in inclinations, in affection; but with the pen I really cannot say we do. Her pen is better employed, and mine, alas! is seldom employed at all, but in the routine of business. I cannot, however, always repress the desire of hearing how you do, and of letting you know there is one in a corner of Norfolk, whose heart preserves in their full glow the love and esteem with which you have long ago inspired it. These sentiments have received a fresh accession of strength by the sight of your 'Sacred Dramas,' a work I have expected with impatience ever since you favoured me with a peep at Moses. It is too late, my dear Miss More, to compliment you on the execution of your pleasing plan, but you must give me leave to mention how sensibly I was touched with pleasure on seeing the tribute you have paid to friendship, in the obliging lines which soon caught my eye, in the sweet poem annexed to the Dramas. It was a sensible mortification to me that I did not meet you in London last Christmas. Perhaps I shall be more fortunate this vacation. We mean to spend part of it at Bristol, and if you are there then, I need not say how great

an addition it will be to the happiness we hope to enjoy in the visit.

We have lately been reading Mr. Soame Jenyns' Essays: you have seen them no doubt. I think, too, that you will agree with me in pronouncing many of them very ingenious and very whimsical. What, for instance, do you think of the idea of coming into this world to be punished for old offences? How would it sound, think you, if people were to date—in the twentieth year of my imprisonment, from my cell in such a place? What discomfort must it be to a poor creature, whose lot is poverty and affliction here, instead of promising himself his portion of good things hereafter, to think that he is only paying off old scores. If Mr. Soame Jenyns has the gout, for instance, as many worthy people have, it must be pleasant to hear the corollaries he cannot but deduce from it.

But I run on till I am afraid I shall oblige you to try to recollect some peccadillo in your pre-existent state, for which you are troubled with this letter; therefore, that I may not lie heavy upon your conscience, as well as exercise your patience, I will bid you adieu, after delivering Mr. Barbauld's compliments and best wishes.

I am, my dear Madam,
Your affectionate friend,
and obedient servant,
A. L. BARBAULD.

We pass over the two or three months which Miss H. More spent at Hampton this winter, in

unvaried tranquillity, till we find her in the ensuing spring writing from the Adelphi to her sister.

Adelphi, March 8, 1784.

I have been in town some days, but had not time to write before, because, as the Duchess of Gordon told the Queen, ''tis nothing but fruz, fruz, all day, and rap, rap, all *neet*.' Being here alone, I have dined out almost every day. This total change of scene, from the quiet, reading, contemplative life I have been so much used to, gave me headaches at first; but now that I am a little seasoned to the hot rooms, I am very well again. One of my engagements was to the Bishop of Chester's. It was a very pleasant party.

Mr. and Mrs. Soame Jenyns, gay, gallant, and young as ever, are really delectable to behold; so fond of each other, and so free from characteristic infirmities. I do not know such another pair. I think they make up between them about 165 years. There is this peculiarity in Mr. Jenyns's character, that though he has the worst opinion of human nature, he has the greatest kindness for the individuals who compose it; and such a conformity in his temper to every thing and everybody in common things, that he seems equally pleased in societies the most opposite. Whatever scepticism he might once have been charged with, I believe him now to be a real believer. The doubts entertained by some persons of his sincerity, appear from his late work on the internal evidence of Christianity to be quite

unfounded. I think him very sincere, but not having been long acquainted with the doctrines of revelation, the novelty of them has excited his love of paradox. The book is very ingenious: perhaps he brings rather too much ingenuity into his religion. I know, however, an instance in which this little work has converted a philosophical infidel, who had previously read all that had been written on the subject, without effect.

We dined on Thursday at the Bishop of Salisbury's. I was a little sad at first, to think of the old party's being so broken up. We had only the Bishop of Chester and Mr. Bryant who had belonged to it. There was other company, and too fine a dinner.

Only think of this being Friday, and no Lælius[1] mentioned. We did not meet till the other day at dinner, at Mrs. Montagu's, and then there were such wonderments and astonishments and lamentations, that we had not met since last year. We were fifteen in company. Mr. Langton was one. I am sure you will honour him, when I tell you he is come on purpose to stay with Dr. Johnson, and that during his illness. He has taken a little lodging in Fleet Street, in order to be near, to devote himself to him. He has as much goodness as learning, and that is saying a bold thing of one of the first Greek scholars we have.

Mr. Locke has just sent me a curiosity, the first number of the London Chronicle, written by John-

[1] Mr. Pepys.

son, an excellent paper, and very characteristic of the author. Mrs. Carter breakfasted with me on Monday. I saw the Lady Windsors the other night at a great assembly at Lady Rothes, which was so hot, so crowded, and so fine, that I never passed a more dull unpleasant evening. I am absolutely resolved I will go to such parties no more. How I grudged the waste of time, to pass an evening squeezed to death among a parcel of fine idle people, many of whom care as little for me, as I do for them; and where it was impossible to have any thing worthy of being called conversation. It was not only vanity but vexation of spirit; but one is drawn in by assurances of 'a very small party.'

As politics spoil all conversation, Mr. Walpole, the other night, proposed that everybody should forfeit half-a-crown who said anything tending to introduce the idea either of *ministers* or *opposition*. I added, that whoever even mentioned *pit coal*, or a *fox-skin muff*, should be considered as guilty; and it was accordingly voted.

From the same to the same.

Holywell House, St. Alban's,
March, 1784.

I imagine this date will puzzle you a little, for I believe I forgot to tell you that Lady Spencer had given us an invitation to spend a week with her. I have no reason to regret the expedition; for to say nothing of the country, the air has done me much good. I have been out ever since breakfast,

exploring the environs of this old town, and tracing the remains of the ancient city of Verulam. There is little of the Roman remains to see, but there is a great deal to imagine, and that is full as well, or perhaps better; but what has delighted me much more, was to see a statue cut out of one piece of marble, of the wisest, brightest, (I will not add Pope's other epithet,) of mankind; you will know that I mean the great prophet of science, my Lord Bacon. I was also vastly pleased with seeing his noble old house, and gallery full of delightful original pictures, of Elizabeth's court. The venerable mansion is, alas! about to be pulled down. Holywell House, where I now am, is going to be repaired. It is at present a very cold one, though my lady has just told me there are twenty fires in it. It was built by Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, whose beautiful form is looking down upon me while I write. By this picture, she must have been a most lovely woman. Lady Spencer is very composed and cheerful, lives with great regularity, and abounds in charitable actions. She has a constant succession of friends in her house. There is no ceremony or form of any kind, as you will believe, when I tell you that I have not changed my dress till to-day, though we have had many noble visitors. I had intended to have called on Dr. Cotton, but he is grown very old, and I was afraid he would not recollect me. Georgiana Shipley is here, and is my walking companion; and the other day we took a ride of twenty miles to a sale of books. We were diverted with bidding for lots.

for other people, without knowing what they contained, and brought home above a hundred little ragged old books for Lady S——, Lord Jersey, &c. The diversion was, to pick out all that was ridiculous in our lots and put into theirs. I employed myself, while I was here, in knitting a pair of stockings for one of Mrs. Pepys's children: I enclose a copy of the letter which I sent with them.

To Mrs. (afterwards Lady,) Pepys.

THE BAS BLANC.

DEAR MADAM,

I beg leave to dedicate the inclosed work, the fruit of a few days' leisure at St. Alban's, to either of your little children, of whose capacity of receiving it you will be the best judge upon trial, for there is a certain fitness, without which the best works are of little value. Though it is so far of a moral cast that its chief end is utility, yet I hope that the child will be able to run through it with pleasure. I may say, without vanity, that it is formed upon the precepts of the great masters of the Epopœia, with but few exceptions. The subject is simple, but it has a beginning, middle, and end. The exordium is the natural introduction by which you are let into the whole work. The middle, I trust, is free from any unnatural tumor or inflation, and the end from any disproportionate littleness. I have avoided bringing about the catastrophe too suddenly, as I knew that would hurt him at whose

feet I lay it. For the same reason, I took care to shun too pointed a conclusion, still reserving my greatest acuteness for this part of my subject. I had materials for a much longer work, but the art to stop has always appeared to me to be no less the great secret of a poet, than the art to blot; and whoever peruses this work will see that I could not have added another line, without such an unravelling as would have greatly perplexed the conclusion. My chief care has been to unite the two great essentials of composition, ease and strength. I do not pretend to have paid any great attention to the passions, and yet I hope my work will not be found deficient, either in warmth or softness; but these will be better felt than expressed. Now and then, partly from negligence and partly from tenuity, I have broken the thread of my narration, but have pieced it so happily, that none but the eye of a professor, which looks into the interior, will detect it: and the initiated are generally candid, because they are in the secret. What little ornament there is, I have bestowed, not injudiciously I trow, on the slenderest part. You will find but one episode, and even that does not obstruct the progress of the main subject; and for parallels I will be bold to say Plutarch does not furnish one so perfect. The rare felicity of this species of composition is the bold attempt to unite poetry with mechanics, for which see the clock-work in the third section. As all innovation is a proof of a false taste, or a fantastic vanity, I was contented to use the old machinery in working up this piece. I have taken

care not to overlay the severe simplicity of the ancients (my great precursors in this walk,) with any finery of my own invention; and like other moderns, you will find I have failed only in proportion as I have neglected my model. After all, I wish the work may not be thought too long; but of this he to whose use it is dedicated will be the best judge: his feelings must determine, and that is a decision from which there lies no appeal; for in this case, as in most others, *le tact* is a surer standard than rules. I beg your pardon for so tedious a preface to so slight a performance; but the subject has been near my heart as often as I have had the work in hand; and as I expect it will long survive all my other productions, I am desirous to deposit it in the Pepys collection; humbly hoping, that though neither defaced nor mutilated, it may be found as useful as many a black-letter manuscript of more recondite learning.

I am, my dear Madam, &c.

L'AMIE DES ENFANS.

To her sister.

Adelphi, 1784.

I have been falsely assuring everybody that there was no contest, but that the old members stood for Bristol. And yet we are such fools as to read history, and believe it too, when we can't come at the truth of what is passing in our own town. A propos of elections—I had like to have got into a fine scrape the other night. I was going to pass the

evening at Mrs. Cole's, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. I went in a chair, and they carried me through Covent Garden. A number of people, as I went along, desired the men not to go through the Garden, as there were a hundred armed men, who, suspecting every chairman belonged to Brookes's, would fall upon us. In spite of my entreaties, the men would have persisted; but a stranger, out of humanity, made them set me down, and the shrieks of the wounded, for there was a terrible battle, intimidated the chairmen, who at last were prevailed upon to carry me another way. A vast number of people followed me, crying out, 'It is Mrs. Fox; none but Mr. Fox's wife would dare to come into Covent Garden in a chair: she is going to canvass in the dark.' Though not a little frightened, I laughed heartily at this, but shall stir no more in a chair for some time. Mrs. Garrick is so interested for Pitt, that we send the man every day to wait the close of the poll, and to bring us the numbers. I do not believe she could eat her dinner without knowing how matters go. I, too, try to be interested, and sometimes do really act solicitude very well; but unluckily for my principles, I met Fox canvassing the other day, and he looked so sensible and agreeable, that if I had not turned my eyes another way, I believe it would have been all over with me.

I have got a new admirer, and we flirt together prodigiously; it is the famous General Oglethorpe, perhaps the most remarkable man of his time. He was foster-brother to the Pretender, and is much

above ninety years old; the finest figure you ever saw. He perfectly realizes all my ideas of Nestor. His literature is great, his knowledge of the world extensive, and his faculties as bright as ever; he is one of the three persons still living who were mentioned by Pope; Lord Mansfield and Lord Marchmont are the other two. He was the intimate friend of Southern, the tragic poet, and of all the wits of that time. He is perhaps the oldest man of a *gentleman* living. I went to see him the other day, and he would have entertained me by repeating passages from Sir Eldred. He is quite a preux chevalier, heroic, romantic, and full of the old gallantry. On Monday I dined at Lady Middleton's, and in the evening went to Mrs. Ord's, where there was everything delectable in the blue way. Mr. Walpole and I fought over the old ground, Pope against Dryden, and Mrs. Montagu backed him, but I would not give up.

I wish Sally had been in my place to-night; she would have enjoyed it, and I could have spared it. I have just returned from Mrs. Montagu's, where I sat close by Lord Rodney, crowned with laurel and glory. Mrs. Pepys proposed that all the women in the room should go up and salute him, and wanted me to begin; I professed that I would willingly be the second, but who would be the first? Nobody choosing to undertake it, so fine a project fell to the ground. He looks more like a delicate feeble man of quality than a hero.

April, 1784.

Did I tell you what a pleasant breakfast I had at Miss Hamilton's, where I met Lord Stormont by appointment? He was vastly agreeable. But as we had Mr. de Luc, and Sir William Hamilton, we had a little too much of virtû, and Calabria, and Vesuvius, all which was more interesting to them, than to his lordship and me. Miss Hamilton told us a pleasant anecdote of Hutton, the Moravian, who has the honour of being occasionally admitted to the royal breakfast-table. 'Hutton,' said the King to him one morning, 'is it true that you Moravians marry without any previous knowledge of each other?' 'Yes, may it please your majesty,' returned Hutton, 'our marriages are *quite royal*.' We had at dinner on Saturday, the Abbé Grant from Rome, Sir William Hamilton, Sir Joshua, Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Vesey, Mrs. Carter, Miss Hamilton, and young Montagu, an amiable and agreeable young man. I think his excellent aunt judges very rightly in not sending him abroad for a year or two: he will learn as much from her conversation, and see as much good company in her house, as he could do in any foreign city in the world; and with greater safety to his morals. But to return to the company: in the evening we had Mrs. Walsingham, the Jenynses, the Pepyses, the Shipleys, Lady Rothes, Mrs. Ord, the Burneys, Mr. Walpole,—in short I think we had above thirty, all as agreeable people as one would wish to see; and yet, being as it were at home, I was obliged to

divide myself, to avoid the censure of addicting myself to favourites, so that I could not pick up much amusement, and indeed Mr. Walpole told me he never saw me so disagreeable; he wished I would be rude and entertaining; so I promised him I would the next time.

I am just returned from a very great dinner at Mrs. Montagu's; but the naughty king robbed us again of Mr. Smelt. Colman dined with us, and inquired about you all. I cannot spare time to write another word, as I am very busy copying the Bas Bleu for the king, who desires to have it. Yesterday Dr. Heberden made me a very long and kind visit, and said civil things about the Bas Bleu. He seems eager to have it printed, and tried to combat all my reasons, which I told him were too good to give up. I had a very civil note from Johnson about a week since; it was written in good spirits; and as it was a volunteer, and not an answer, it looks as if he were really better. He tells me he longs to see me, to praise the Bas Bleu as much as envy can praise;—there's for you!

April, 1784.

Did I tell you I went to see Dr. Johnson? Miss Monckton carried me, and we paid him a very long visit. He received me with the greatest kindness and affection, and as to the Bas Bleu, all the flattery I ever received from every body together would not make up the sum. He said,—but I seriously insist you do not tell any body, for I am ashamed of writing it even to you;—he

said there was no name in poetry that might not be glad to own it.'[1] You cannot imagine how I stared: all this from Johnson, that parsimonious praiser! I told him I was delighted at his approbation; he answered quite characteristically,' And so you may, for I give you the opinion of a man who does not rate his judgment in these things very low, I can tell you.'

We had a good party at the Bishop of St. Asaph's a few nights ago. Among the chief talkers was Mr. Erskine; he has amazing abilities, but to me he is rather brilliant than pleasant. His animation is vehemence; and he contrives to make the conversation fall too much on himself—a sure way not to be agreeable in mixed conversation. It is not natural that I should much commend his taste in letters, because he and I disagreed on the few subjects we started. I confess, however, that that is no proof of his being in the wrong. The bar seems to be a fitter theatre for his talents than the drawing-room, where good breeding is still more necessary than wit. On Saturday night Mrs. Garrick and I drank tea with Lælius[2] and his lady, only a *partie quarrée*, so quiet and comfortable! He read select passages from the poets, and we commented, and criticised, and were chatty and foolish. We had been two months trying to get that quiet evening.

[1] Her request was complied with; this passage never was shown to anyone. We find a corroboration of this account in Johnson's own letters to Mrs. Thrale; he says, 'Miss More has written a poem called the Bas Bleu; which is in my opinion a very great performance. It wanders about in manuscript, and surely will soon find its way to Bath.'

[2] Mr. Pepys.

I have told Mrs. Vesey all the fine things you say of your pathetic Recorder.[1] She agrees with me in thinking him very bright, though a little coarse.

The autumn of this year was passed with her sisters at Bristol.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1784.

'A friend in need is a friend indeed!' So says the proverb, so says the comedy, and so says your favoured correspondent at Glanvilla, who was sick, waiting for the doctor, when your delightful packet came; but before I proceed, I will tell you, my dear friend, that this sickness is only what goes about, and what one cannot go about with, so that being confined, and having no dear Miss More to make the day seem short whether it rained or shone, I cannot tell you how low and uncomfortable I was, when the sight of your hand-writing revived me, and your extremely pleasant epistle delighted me. Though I have read it often, I cannot recount its particular charms. The pleasant Vesey will be enchanted. You do not insist upon her understanding half of it, but she will understand enough to wish Sir Joshua Reynolds would send her a statuary from the Royal Acadamy to put you upon a pedestal in the inmost niche of her interior cabinet. En attendant, I am proud to think what a respectable figure I make in my own county of Kent; for

[1] Richard Burke.

all Margate have read these pretty compliments before now.

I had a visit yesterday from the Pepyses; we made the incomparable "Bas Bleu" the theme of our discourse, the subject of our praise; but I find these classical gentry have a great advantage over such ignoramuses as your humble servant; for having treated Mr. Cole with a perusal of it in my presence, he went into such raptures at the allusions, imitations, &c. over and above the *tout ensemble*, that he wanted to have it proclaimed to the world and printed that minute: he was so charmed, that I let him read it a second time, though his visit was short, and then I carried off my treasure very safe. It is now with Lady Amherst, at her earnest desire to see it, but with a strict injunction that not a line or a word should be copied. If ever you are disposed to take off this embargo you will let me know.

Your letter, too, called for congratulations in the highest style, on your being elected member of the French Academy; but as no academical oratory or delightful poetry will come to my assistance on this great occasion, (and a very great one surely it is,) I must be content to tell you plainly that I was much pleased with this distinguished honour conferred on merit and my dear friend; and that it is my earnest hope that you may long continue to please, to edify, to be admired, esteemed, and honoured both at home and abroad. I have kept the secret inviolable because you bade me; longing, however, to reveal it to the Hadley party, and to Mr. Cole, who has this minute left me.

I hope you had a pleasant journey home, and halted with Lady Bathurst, and afterwards found your family well. I hope to appear to Mrs. Garrick some fine morning in October, but first I must go to Bulstrode and treat my dear Mrs. Delany with 'Bas Bleu;' perhaps I may sing it to her, for I must tell you of a most ridiculous dream I have had,—so ridiculous that I remember it still. Methought I was required by a very large and respectable company to sing the whole of the 'Bas Bleu,' which was set to music. In vain I pleaded that I had no voice since I was grown old, and that if I attempted to sing a psalm at church, it was more like purring than singing. I was overruled *j'éntonnai donc le cantique;* and in the midst of it, who should arrive in a post chaise from Bristol but Miss H. More, on a visit to the lady of the house. Who she was I know not, but I thought how flattering it must be to Miss More, to find so many respectable people listening with the utmost attention to the recital of her composition, even though degraded by the incapacity of the performer. I thought, too, this incident of your arrival had given particular pleasure to Mrs. Garrick, who was one of the auditory, and to whom I said, Madam, I intend to spend the Christmas with you at Hampton. I do not remember she answered *Dieu ne plaise!* which I should have put into my dream to make it *vraisemblable;* but I suppose I kept every body in character, and of course did not omit Mrs. Garrick's perfect good breeding, *mais c'est trop parler de songes.* Let me now come to the reality, that I

am, my dear Miss More's truly affectionate and grateful friend,

F. B.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bristol, 1784.

MY DEAR MADAM,

What a delightful letter did you send me, and how grateful did I feel for it: nay, the pleasant odour still remains upon my mind. It was the more acceptable for being a volunteer; and one always receives a gift with more gratitude than a debt. *Mais le moyen d'ecrire?* with so much company and so many interruptions. Bristol is as *bad* as London, without being as *good*. I have seen a good many of your Kentish friends lately, not one of whom, however, do I include as provoking the above lamentation. Mrs. E. Bouverie, Miss Marsham, Lady Hales, and Lady Plymouth's family. We made such large parties that I fancied myself not in Bristol but London. Add to all this, that the Provost of Eton and Mrs. Roberts are on a visit at our Dean's, which causes visitings, and replies, and rejoinders, without end. They press me much to halt for a week at Eton, on my road to London; which, as I have never seen Eton or Windsor, I should like very well; but the season opposes every idea of pleasure in seeing places; so if I can I shall retract the promise which in a rash moment I made, and reserve this visit for brighter skies and longer days. I *heartily* accept (my dear Madam) your

congratulation,on the high honour done me by so respectable and learned a body of foreigners; there is, I believe, no greater danger in this uncertain world than that a head which is only tolerably reasonable should be turned with the honours and glories of it. Heaven, however, often by some interfering Providence prevents it. The very day on which I received *Mes Pancartes Academiciennes*, I was taken ill of a fever, from which by the aid of blistering, and the whole medical artillery, I am quite recovered; so I beg you will not waste any compassion on me, my dear Madam, for 'Richard's himself again;' and I am going to confirm my cure by riding on horseback. My time, too, has been much taken up in answering all my letters from France. The gentleman who wrote to me in the name of the Academy has translated Percy and several other of my things into French. He gave me instructions how I was to act, and in what mnnner I was to write to the whole Academy collectively; and what is worst, told me that my letter of thanks, which must be in French, was to be transcribed and preserved in the archives of the Academy. Oh! how I wished for l'aimable Hôstesse de Glanvilla at my elbow, to have written this letter for me! My desire of concealing this honour did not spring from any kind of affectation, but from a real and deep consciousness how little claim I had to such a title. Dear Mrs. Vesey was quite delighted with her visit to Glanvilla. Dr. Warren, it seems, has pronounced Mr. Vesey to be at present, unfit for the voyage to Dublin.

I am glad to learn that poor Johnson was able to

dine at Teston last autumn: he looked badly; said it was a heavy stroke, but that it may still please God to restore him. Alas! I doubt it.

I have not had time to read any of Dr. Blair's Rhetoric. Bristol has all the bustle of London, and leaves me almost as little time to myself; but one must submit to the disadvantage of an acquaintance too large to be select; yet here are many excellent persons.

Mr. Maty (I think) grows very pert and flippant, and decides with a tone of superiority that I believe I could better bear if he did not write in the first person. Perhaps it is the egotism which offends me; he decides on the literary rank of our amiable Bishop as authoritatively as Quintilian could have done, but not quite so wisely.

My five volumes of 'Hoole's Ariosto' are just brought me: each volume has a very pretty frontispiece, and that, I believe, is as far as I shall go. I mean no disrespect to the translation, which I take to be a very good one; and people of taste will be glad that English literature is enriched with a good version of so original a poet; but this great but naughty poet must be read, if read at all, in the original.

I have had a great many prints, pamphlets, and other little things sent me from Rouen, by a person who came from thence; but unluckily for me he happened to have put a popish prayer-book among my things, which were therefore, by being caught in bad company, all found guilty of popery at Brighthelmstone, and condemned to be burnt, to my great

regret, as it will grieve the senders. By this time, my dear Madam, I fancy you will be looking towards London, in search of the 'human face divine;' which, after all the pleasures of retirement and rural felicity, is not amiss as a change. To hear birds sing one six months, and men talk for the other, is a grateful vicissitude. I hope to get to Mrs. Garrick in December, and to knock some fine morning at a double door in Audley Street, before I take the veil at Hampton; for we really live as quiet and as solitary as nuns; but as it is not *for ever*, I like it prodigiously; particularly as it gives me (and it is the only place that does so) opportunity to indulge my appetite for reading to the full extent of its voracity. I mix light anecdote with grave metaphysics. I read last spring Monsieur de St. Simon, which is easy of digestion after dinner; and Mr. Locke, which requires the mind and faculties to be broad awake, after tea. Mr. Stewart's new History of Scotland lay on the table, and presented its handsome type to me in vain, till I had finished Mr. Hayley's new work;—the poet before the historian is, I think, but lawful precedence, unless for those who are proselytes to Sir Harry Saville's opinion, that poets are the best authors next to those who write prose. My dear Madam, I hope all are well who belong to you, from Charles Street to the Land's End.

I am, most gratefully yours,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

1784.

I have been an arrant vagabond, my dear Madam, since you heard from me last, and have been a transient sojourner in many a hospitable mansion open for the succour of way-worn travellers. As you well know that your friend Mrs. Walsingham is all sense and spirit, you will readily believe that our time passed very pleasantly at Thames Ditton: nothing could surpass her politeness. I said I had never seen an air-balloon; she struck with her magic wand, and lo! a balloon appeared, forty-five feet in circumference; I had a great mind to wish for an eighty-four gun man-of-war, as I conjecture she keeps them also ready in case her guests should wish for one. My Kentish tour proved in all respects a very pleasant one. Teston and its inhabitants are delightful. Hunton[1] is indeed a sweet little spot, and our excellent Bishop seems to have more true enjoyment, and to possess himself more entirely there than in any other place:

'There contemplation plumes her ruffled wings;—'

for the smoothest wing will be ruffled by the crowd and pressure of the bustling world. The fortnight I spent with our friend Mrs. Montagu I need not say to you, my dear Madam, was passed profitably and pleasantly; as one may say of her, what Johnson

[1] The little country living of Bishop Porteus.

has said of somebody else, that 'she never opens her mouth but to say *something*.' The Primate of Ireland and Sir William Robinson were at Sandleford for the first three or four days after I got thither. I was a little afraid of his Grace at first, as he carries a dignity you know, in his person and *abord*, which excites more respect than is quite consistent with one's ease; but he laid aside his terrors, and was all graciousness and complacency, and condescended to join in the favourite subjects of the two ladies, poetry and criticism; though, if I may hazard a conjecture upon his turn of mind, I should rather think him distinguished for wisdom, and knowledge of men and things in a worldly view, than for any acute wit, or polite literature. He seems, however, to have a general good taste. The great apartment, that was the chapel, is quite in order; and the romantic scenery presented to the eye by the gothic aisle which fronts the great windows, is very delightful. We enjoyed our moonlight gambols not a little. I could not help regretting that there were no such little amiable gentlefolks as fairies, to people a scene so congenial to their characters. Oh that these sweet tiny intelligences would admit me to some of their merry festivals! I would rather eat a slice of moonshine with Robin Goodfellow, or sip an acorn full of dew with Oberon, than taste the finest supper that ever Weltjie decorated; and you cannot imagine how I envy a pretty Welsh girl I know, because she really believes in the existence and attendance of these little aerial dears. But as a light thought now and then introduces a serious

one, it is charming to think that one day we ourselves shall be still less incumbered with body, and flesh, and sense, than even these little incorporeal favourites of mine; and that without a figure, without poetry, without fancy, and without romance, we shall be all pure intellect. I cannot think without envy, how little changing and rarifying Fenelon, and a few others will require, before they become pure sublimated spirits. My appointment at Oxford was to flirt with Dr. Johnson, but he was a recreant knight, and had deserted. He had been for a fortnight at the house of my friend Dr. Adams, the head of Pembroke, with Mr. Boswell; but the latter being obliged to go to town, Johnson was not thought well enough to remain behind, and afterwards to travel by himself; so that he left my friend's house the very day I got thither, though they told me he did me the honour to be very angry and out of humour, that I did not come so soon as I had promised. I am grieved to find that his mind is still a prey to melancholy, and that the fear of death operates on him to the destruction of his peace. It is grievous—it is unaccountable! He who has the Christian hope upon the best foundation; whose faith is strong, whose morals are irreproachable! But I am willing to ascribe it to bad nerves, and bodily disease.

While I was at Oxford, I received so obliging and pressing a letter from Mrs. Barrington, threatening me with the loss of the bishop's blessing if I refused,—that I was prevailed upon to go to Mongewell, though it was rather a retrograde motion. I

spent a few days pleasantly, and I hope not unprofitably with them. There happened to be an ordination while I was there, and it was edifying to see the earnest, affectionate, and devotional matter in which the Bishop went through that important ceremony. I could not see anybody of Trinity College; but the *general* accounts I could pick up of your young lords were to their honour. The above-mentioned circumstances delayed my return hither till two days ago, when I arrived with my friend Mrs. Kennicott, who is come to spend some time with me. The comfort to find all my friends alive and well after an absence of more than eight months, is no small blessing! In the post chaise, Mrs. K. and I read our worthy friend, the Dean of Canterbury's[1] letters on Infidelity. We have both an high esteem for his worth and parts; but could not help wishing as we went along, that he had suppressed a great part of this book: it will not add to his reputation, nor (though extremely well-intended) can it do much good. He attacks the infidels in their own way, with gaiety and humour; but irony is a figure which it requires great skill to manage, and I am sorry to say, he is sometimes low where he intends to be humorous; *au reste*, there is some good argument, and I like almost all the latter part. I am now reading with great appetite Professor White's Sermons. It is long since I have met with a more noble, judicious, spirited, and eloquent defence of the Christian

[1] Dr. Horne.

religion. His parallel of Christ and Mahomet is drawn with great piety, skill, and temper. This last quality always weighs prodigiously with me. Champions defeat their end, when they vilify beyond the truth. Those who say that Mahomet was not a person of very great sagacity, help his cause.

It is now high time to thank you, my dear madam, for your very handsome list of subscribers. Do you know that my poor milkwoman has been sent for to Stoke, to visit the Duchess of Beaufort and the Duchess of Rutland; and to Bath, to Lady Spencer, Mrs. Montagu, &c. I hope all these honours will not turn her head, and indispose her for her humble occupations. I would rather have her *served* than *flattered*. Your noble and munificent friend, the Duchess Dowager of Portland, has sent me a twenty pound bank-note for her; so as I take it, she will soon be the richest poetess, certainly the richest milkwoman in Great Britain.

It is too late to send my letter to the post, but I hope it will escape untaxed to-morrow. I had a great deal of company yesterday evening, Kentish Lady Hailes, and her four blooming daughters; Lady Bathurst, and her fair train; so we made up quite a little London-looking party. I am going to these last when I have released you; which, if you had not all the goodness you have, you would have been longing for full half an hour ago; but when I begin writing to you, I really do not know when to leave off, because it is so like talking to you; and if you remember, I always thought eight o'clock

struck sooner in your drawing-room, than anywhere else.

Yours ever,
My dear madam,
H. M.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1784.

Macbeth has murdered sleep, and Pitt has murdered scribbling! What becomes of the damsels with ah's! and oh's! who tell some dear Miss Willis all their woes! And what becomes of me, when, after many days delay, I find leisure to scribble to my dear friend at Bristol any nonsense, *qui plait à ma plume?* Why, she will generously tell me that she has postage in her pocket, but we have been used to franks, and besides, the post is bewitched, and charges nobody knows what for letters; two shillings and nine-pence, I think, Mrs. Leveson says she paid for a letter, free, Falmouth, but no date of the day. Now he seems to have got his lesson, and remembers it. The Duke is gone to Badminton, with sons of all sizes, and Dr. Penny *le fidel Achate*, so that I am left *chargée d'affaires;* I am so happy with my two daughters, that I do by no means find out that London is unpleasant in September; indeed sometimes I rise with the lark, and run down to breakfast at Glanvilla, where I must own that Mrs. Keeble gives me better cream and butter, raspberries, and fruit of all sorts, than I find here. I walk and sit in my

garden, get an early dinner, and repair at sun-set to the working party, (not a bit like a lying-in-room, but with sashes open) in Grosvenor Square. Yesterday we saw there, and the Duchess saw it, just as well as if we had been in Moorfields, the great balloon, which had so many thousand spectators, that I assure you they were as little to be imagined as counted. Where all came from that I saw running, walking, crawling towards the spot, was to me incomprehensible. Admiral Barrington is hurt to think that no Englishman has gone up yet either in France or England; and indeed I thought it so suitable to English daring, that when first I heard of Messrs. Charles and Robert, I affirmed they must have had English mothers. Lunardi's nest, when I saw it yesterday looking like a peg top, seemed, I assure you, higher than the moon 'riding towards her highest noon.'

All this while I have not thanked you for your charming epistle, my dear friend: whenever you are disposed so to treat me, you have only to direct to Lord F. in Audley Street, and without inclosing, for I cannot mistake your hand. I can easily believe you spent your time very agreeably with Mrs. Montagu at Sandleford, and how glad you must have been to see Mrs. Garrick arrive. The Cathedral window and Gothic grove I delighted in, and could hardly eat my dinner for gazing at it by moonlight. They must be charming, but for pity's sake no fairies. I don't believe I ever was young enough to like Mab or Oberon, so much do

I differ from you; *ah qui en doute!* Adieu! my dear friend, another odious revolution of the post is, that it rides in coaches, so as I go out of town to-morrow, I shall not be back time enough to send it on the day it is marked for, and it will keep no more than a roasting pig; whereas I used to write all my letters of a night, after that eight o'clock which parted us, and as to covers, I had them safe in a bag. These were the halcyon days of scribbling; now I am sitting up till past midnight, that this may be ready for to-morrow. Can you help saying, *Ah elle ne vaut pas la peine?* Yes, for it tells, and it proves that

I am most affectionately,

Your's,

F. B.

From Mr. Walpole to Miss H. More.

May 6, 1784.

Mr. Walpole thanks Miss More a thousand times not only for so obligingly complying with his request, but for letting him have the satisfaction of possessing and reading again and again her charming and very genteel poem, the 'Bas Bleu.' He ought not, in modesty, to commend so much a piece, in which he himself is flattered, but truth is more durable than blushing, and he must be just, though he may be vain. The ingenuity with which she has introduced, so easily, very difficult rhymes, is admirable; and though there is a quantity of learning, it has all the air of negligence, instead

of that of pedantry. As she commands him, he will not disobey; and so far from giving a single copy, he gives her his word that it shall not go out of his hands. He begs his particular compliments to Mrs. Garrick, and is Miss More's most devoted,

and much obliged humble servant,

H. WALPOLE.

From Mrs. Vesey to Miss H. More.

Margate, May, 1784.

MY DEAR MADAM,

The first line you cast your eye upon, will make an apology for not answering your obliging letter in London useless; but make the prize high enough, and even pot-hooks will talk. It is impossible not to tell you my dream last night. The conversation fell upon Charles the Sixth and the Duc D'Orleans at the fatal bal masqué. I imagined we were sitting together, when you suddenly left me to whisper a masque habited en Sauvage, like the Duc D'Orleans. I inquired who he was; you answered, 'It is the sun.' Next morning I had the pleasure of opening my eyes upon your delightful packet, a call to banish sleep,—there was never before such a trumpet at Margate. How could I help exclaiming, my dream is out; his Excellency has been telling her of the bright regions, the bright geniuses he has illuminated in remote antiquity! She is quite at home at the enchanting banquets. Mr. Vesey, who is much better acquainted with

the geniuses, the Beaux of Athens, Rome, and London, than myself, is enchanted, and will write to you myself. I suppose it will steal into print under adopted names, and I desire to take my place, as I cannot think of a name of two syllables. I have read your poem but once, for Mr. Vesey took it from me, and read it with such delight as I cannot express. Airing is generally a dull hour, but here it is enlivened by the dashing of the sea, and the prospect of the fatal Goodwin Sands, which have been under the inspection of the Royal Society, and the danger is now found to be suction. This I had from a daughter of Sir Cloudesley Shovel. The fields are pleasant, from the rich cultivation, where wheat and poppy rise together. These two blessings, of sleep and food in conjunction, have been attempted in the remarks of some poet's quill. I wish it had been your's, and I should have had them by heart. Mr. Vesey says, every part of the globe grows wheat: I doubt not but the poppy is her handmaid, though the jade in warmer climates sometimes over-offices her business. I am now writing in a lobby on the stair-case, on a card-table; the demon of gaming no doubt will think himself very ill-used, though his handmaid chance has the sole direction of my pen.

I have the pleasure of talking of you every evening with the Duchess of Portland and Miss Harris; the latter I hope will tell you next winter, how she skaited through the northern climates, almost to every court, over frozen seas, which, when they were liquid, gave her the episode of a

Shipwreck: but one need not go to Russia for the artillery of winter; we have had it here, and it is now howling upon my staircase. A lady was resolved to brave all its majestic tricks, and took a lodging upon a dangerous cliff, where, two nights since, the sea went to bed to her. I am very glad Mrs. Garrick and you gave Mrs. Montagu the pleasure of your company; her resources of conversation are as inexhaustible as her friendship: she will certainly go down to distant ages, while Garrick and More will partake the gale.

I would toss this blotted paper out of the window, but it must take its run before the last hour, free from post tax. Adieu, most agreeable friend, look with some compassion upon a worn-out pen, more fit to scratch a letter to a Hottentot, than to one so polished and delightful. Let me conclude with what I feel for the place you have given me in your charming poem; though undeserving, I am not unfeeling.

Your most obliged and affectionate,

E. VESEY.

P. S. I have met with a fragment of Gray's upon Kingsgate, with a fine poetical picture of the Goodwin Sands, and the uninhabited monastery, but so malevolent against the builder, that I cannot believe it to be all his own.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, July 17, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I have been so much employed since I came hither, in doing the honours of the neighbouring woods and rocks to some friends, and have been so entirely a vagrant ever since I left London, that I have hardly done so grave a thing as to write a letter, nor so idle a thing as to write verses, nor so irksome a one as to correct them. I have made the most of this enchanting weather, and like King Lear have 'abjured all roofs.' My reading has been as idle as the rest of my employments, and if I do not soon reform, I shall become a convert to the entreaties of my gay and gallant friend, General Oglethorpe, who has long been trying to proselyte me to the old romance; gravely lamenting that the only fault I have is refusing to read the old romances; assuring me that it is the only way to acquire *noble sentiments*; but I do confess that hitherto I have never been able to get through a single page of histories which have no approximation to the manners and passions of this world. I must have *men* and *women*, with whom I can have sentiments, affections, and interests in common: I don't care how romantic the story, or how exalted the character, provided it be still *probable* adventure, and *possible* perfection.

I have just laboured through Dryden's Fables, chiefly out of complaisance to Mrs. Montagu, Mr.

Walpole, and Dr. Burney; but like a confirmed bigot, all that I read on the other side of the question, only serves to confirm me more stedfastly in the old faith. I am ready to allow the beauty of a multitude of passages, the spirit of the expression, and the vigour and variety of the versification, but they have the deadly poetical sin of not interesting me; nor do lines from them occur to my mind every hour, suitable to *every* character and to *every* occurrence, as they do from Shakspeare, the poet of human actions and human passions; and from Pope, that eternal embellisher of common sense, common life, and just thinking; whose every line is a maxim or a portrait. You will say I must be terribly indigent of matter, to tread over again this beaten ground, and you will say right.

I had the satisfaction of hearing that Miss Seward's *Louisa* made you weep. I remember the difficulty I had to make you promise to read it. The same repugnance I have had to combat in a dozen other people: all were as unwilling as if it had been a sermon, or something that was to do them good; but when they *had* read it, all who had any taste for imagery, sentiment, and poetry, thanked me for having compelled them to enjoy this pleasure; and I expected *you* would have had the same gratitude. Miss Seward's imagination is bright and glowing; she is rich in expression, and admirable at description; but to counterbalance all these excellences she has one fault, which is of great magnitude, but which may not perhaps be so great an offence in your eyes, as I confess it is in mine:

what it is, I shall not mention, and in case it does not strike you I am willing you should call me mean and malignant for suggesting it: a little envy is natural, if not pardonable; when I see Mrs. Pepys I will tell *her* my objections. I am much obliged to you for exerting your critical acumen on the verses; I shall take your hints, make the alterations you suggest, and leave out the two lines whose incorrect rhymes you quarrel with. Sometimes I am puzzled about rhyming, whether it should be to the eye or to the ear, but am never *quite* contented with a rhyme which does not satisfy both.

Since I have given into this very wicked kind of dissipation, of reading nothing but idle verses, I wish you would tell me something to read. I have run through a few cantos of Ariosto; but the casual delight I received was so often broken in upon by serious resentment and insupportable ennui, that I believe I shall give it up, for though I am often pleased, I am often angry, and still oftener tired: do not betray me, for I know it is *mauvais ton* to have so little enthusiasm on this subject. A propos of enthusiasm, do you remember a sweet little poem of Dr. Warton's, '*The Enthusiast?*' I read it yesterday in one of my rambles, with such an accompaniment of scenery as made it very delightful to me, and just such as the author may be supposed to have written it in.

You will think it is a wet day by my writing so long a letter, but you are mistaken. I would not, however, venture to send such an one if I did not hope you were settled in the country, where

people expect and forgive nonsense with more ease than they do in London. I shall release you, however, after desiring you to present my kind compliments to Mrs. Pepys, and to tell her sweet little boy that I love him very much.

I am your obliged, &c.

H. More.

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

Mount Ephraim, Aug. 8, 1784.

My dear Friend,

There is often a certain degree of profanation, as well as unfaithfulness, of which the mind is perfectly conscious, and for which it never fails to reproach itself, though no laws and no censure (but its own) can ever reach it: of such a kind of profanation should I have been conscious, had I suffered myself to answer your delightful letter in the midst of wrangling, dissonance, and chicanery, with which I have of late been surrounded, and from which I did not escape till ten o'clock on Saturday night. But now that I am happily placed on this delightful hill,—where I have a fine extensive prospect in all the luxuriant beauty of the country before my eyes, and have made the long wished-for exchange of town habits and town ideas, for country thoughts and country pleasures,—that of expressing to you my gratitude for your friendly remembrance of me occurs to my mind as one of the first in which to indulge myself; not as discharging a debt, but acknowledging a favour. Exclusively of the *general*

pleasure which I never fail to receive from your letters, I had, in the last, the peculiar one of being much flattered by your coinciding with me in opinion upon two or three subjects in which I had begun to fear I was somewhat deficient in taste. With respect to the old romance, I cannot speak of it: I never read a syllable in that way, having been initiated from the first in real life and manners; after which I conceive it to be impossible to rise or descend (whichever you call it) to the other without absolute disgust. I wish indeed I had read books in that way at a time of life when they might have given me pleasure; as I well remember my dear and admirable friend Lord Lyttleton used to speak of them in the same terms of approbation as your gay and gallant admirer General Oglethorpe; but then, I apprehend, they must be administered in the proper season; for now, I am persuaded, they would be as nauseous as pap, which, however, I doubt not, in former days, was very delicious; and their effect upon the morals of our countrymen (may I add countrywomen?) was evidently much better than that of modern romances, by connecting with the passion of love every sentiment of honour, courage, and generosity. The old romances had, no doubt, a tendency to elevate that passion which it has been the business of the modern romance to debase; and as works of *imagination*, I do not doubt that they are excellent; but though I should be sorry that my little boy should not pass through the medium of Ovid's Metamorphoses, nay, that he should not (in a particular stage of his educa-

tion) prefer the wild imagination, and the false brilliancy of that romantic poet, to the chaste, sober, and correct beauties of Virgil; yet, if *after* he had once *tasted* the charms of truth and simplicity, he should go *back* and give a preference to the former, I should consider it as a kind of apostasy. I most sincerely lament that I did not read Ariosto at a time of life when it might have taken hold of my imagination, which, from the trial I made of it last year at this place, I am persuaded it never will now, not because it is not good enough, but because my mind is not open enough to such impressions; as I experienced most wofully, not long ago, with regard to Sindbad the sailor, whose exploits in fishing up diamonds with raw beef-steaks, was, at one time of my life, the very delight of my heart; but now, alas! those delights are no more!

A propos of Ariosto,—when I say of him, *in general*, that I have lost my capacity of being pleased with him, let me, in justice to myself and him, except that delightful passage where he comes to the spot where Angelica and Medoro had been together. The possibilities with which he endeavours to deceive himself—the starting from the bed as if he had been upon a nest of adders—all that passage is truth, nature, passion, and every thing that is most excellent and wonderful. I would most readily travel from home to Bristol for—but why Bristol? I recollect that you are, at this time of writing, at Sandleford. What will our good friend, Mrs. Montagu, say, if you should betray me; she, whose mind is equally open to the wildest sallies of

imagination, and the closest metaphysical reasoning, what will she say to all my humiliating confessions?

So it was *you* at last to whom I am indebted for the delicious tears I shed over the poem. I have been carrying about my thanks ever since I read it, as one carries about a guinea in a piece of paper, quite sure that I owed them to somebody, but not being able to recollect to whom. I am most sincerely obliged to you for recommending this poem to me, and wish that in return I could answer your inquiry after some book to read, as much to your satisfaction. I have been running my eye over a book lately, which has afforded *me* very great pleasure, 'Les Veillées du Château,' by M. Genlis, but I should distrust myself in mentioning it to you, because I suppose a great part of the pleasure I derived from it was owing to the delight which I foresaw my boy would soon have in reading it, and from finding it so perfectly unexceptionable and entertaining; which, to say the truth, it was full as much to *me* as it ever can be to him. As I had read most of Coxe's Russia, and did not bring hither Cook's Voyages, I have had the curiosity, within these few days, to look into Harris's Philosophical Arrangements, which, if you have any delight in metaphysical abstraction, is so far a valuable work, as it gives you some idea of those speculations for which (among other things) the name of Aristotle is placed so high in the temple of Fame; but Mrs. Montagu, the beginning of last winter, made an observation on metaphysics which I shall

never be able to get out of my head, and which haunts me through all the predicaments, viz. that metaphysical researches put her in mind of the old riddle, 'A roomful, and a houseful, but nobody can catch a handful.' Pray tell her she has done me great mischief in my metaphysical speculations by telling me this, for that several times within this week, when I thought that I had just caught hold of *primary matter* by the nape of the neck, the thought of this has made me laugh, and let it slip out of my fingers.

Adieu, my dear madam; and whenever you are disposed to talk on any of *our* topics, be so good as to remember that there is a friend upon Mount Ephraim, whose mind is very much in unison with *yours*.

Yours, affectionately,

W. W. PEPYS.

From Miss More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

There has scarcely one bright September sun darted through my window upon my écritoire, but I have resolved to thank you for your very entertaining letter, which I received one day at dinner at Sandleford, and which furnished a very pleasing desert to the whole party; for to show you what *entire* confidence you may place in me, I obeyed your injunction of *not* betraying your treasonable sentiments, by putting your letter into Mrs. Mon-

tagu's hand, who forthwith read it aloud: this produced a great deal of pleasantry, and renewed the old critical squabbles again. We had not forces for a regular battle, but many a skirmish did we fight; in these I was sure to be worsted by the disciplined veteran, who alas! has *arms as well as rules*.

I need not tell you that my visit was an exceedingly pleasant one: we passed our time in the full enjoyment of the best blessings *this* world has to bestow, friendship, tranquillity, and literature. You agree with me, I know, in thinking that what makes our accomplished friend so delightful in society, is, that in her company *les jeux et les ris* constantly act as pages and maids of honour to Apollo and the nine, who always owe half their attractions to their lovely train; and who, though very *respectable* without them, can never without them be entirely *captivating*. So well were we pleased with the manner in which we lived together, that we have been actually in treaty for repairing to Sandleford to *encore* my visit, but we cannot accommodate our time to each other, so I shall stay till Mrs. M. comes to Bath.

I have lived a most gloriously idle life, all the last months, rambling about the romantic hills and delicious vallies of Somersetshire: it is full of enchanting scenery. The views are rather interesting than magnificent; and the neighbourhood of the friend's house where I was, abounds with the most smiling vallies, the most touching little home views, the prettiest rising and falling grounds, the clearest

living streams, and the most lovely hanging woods I ever saw. These gentle scenes, which are *agrestes* without being savage, are, I am persuaded, more delightful to *live* amongst, than the blaze and the roar, the awful and astonishing, of the sublime: of this I am convinced, by a ride we took through the lofty cliffs of Cheddar, so stupendously romantic that the shade of Ossian or the ghost of Taliessen himself might range, not undelighted, through them; my imagination was delighted, was confounded, was oppressed, and darted a thousand years back into the days of chivalry and enchantment, at seeing hang over my head, vast ledges of rock exactly resembling mouldered castles and ruined abbeys. I had a delightful confusion of broken images in my head, without one distinct idea; but the delight was of so serious a nature that I could scarcely refrain from crying, especially when we sat down upon a fragment of rock, and heard one of Gray's odes finely set, and sung with infinite feeling. I would have given the world to have heard my favourite Ode to Melancholy by Beaumont and Fletcher; you know it:

> An eye that's fastened to the ground,
> A tongue chained up without a sound;
> Gloomy cells, and twilight groves,
> Places which pale Passion loves, &c. &c.

But these pensive pleasures should be repeated at long intervals, they wind up the mind too high, and infuse into the spirit a sentiment compounded of sadness and delight, which, though it may qualify

one to write odes, yet indisposes one for a much more indispensable thing, the enjoyment of the intercourse of ordinary society. But you will grow sick of these sombre scenes, though I think you would have performed the pilgrimage itself with enthusiasm.

Present my kind compliments to Mrs. Pepys: I know not where you are, but I suppose on Mount Ephraim.

I am your obliged, &c.

H. More.

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

1784.

I am rejoiced to find that your imagination has been so finely regaled with beautiful scenery, for I know that with *you* the impression made by these delightful views penetrates much deeper than the eye. I too have been constantly feasted with this most enchanting country, and have daily felt, what I hold to be one of the highest pleasures in life, at least one of the most pure and unmixed, that exhilarating tranquillity which a fine country and fine weather never fails to inspire. There is a consciousness which always attends that species of delight, and which adds much to its effect on the mind, viz. that it cannot be indulged to *excess*; this was certainly meant by Milton when he calls the vernal delight *unblamed*; but I think it may be carried a little further, and not only be considered as *unblamed*, but by a very easy transition converted

into the most natural and sublime act of devotion, for how is it possible,

> When the eye has caught new pleasures,
> While the landscape round it measures
> Russet lawn and fallows grey, &c.

not to exclaim

> These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good.

My good friend, Lord Lyttleton, who gave this just and natural turn to the mind by that inscription on a seat which commanded all the beauties of nature, used to say, when I expressed to him my feelings upon that subject, that it was only because I had a religious turn of mind, that I passed so easily from admiration to devotion, but that the transition was not so *common* as I imagined: whether this be so, or not, I will not determine; but if it is not, I think it must be owing to the prevalent influence of some bad passion, which counteracts the natural effect of such scenes upon the mind; but where the mind is not either habitually depraved or under the immediate influence of bad or strong passions, I can hardly conceive that the thoughts should not be directed upwards. The very sensation of one's own happiness in these moments, naturally inspires the heart with gratitude, and diffuses over it that delightful unruffled animation which always terminates in glory to God and good will towards men.

I am not only acquainted with the Ode to Melancholy, but have heard it admirably set to

music by Weber, for which, I am told, we are indebted to the taste of Sir Watkin Williams. It is in truth a charming composition, and I remember being surprised at myself for not having seen it before I heard it performed, but *that* is only one of the many thousand jewels which lie hid under the rubbish of Beaumont and Fletcher, and which I fear will ever lie hid from me, as I shall not have the heart, at this time of day, to wade through so much as I must do, to get at them. If you *have* waded through them, I should esteem it a great favour if you would refer me to any parts which have particularly struck you, as I could rely with so much security upon *your* taste for the selection. I once asked Mrs. Thrale to undertake this office for me, but she told me that she had omitted to mark them at the time, and that she could not think of going over the same road again, as she well remembered that the way was full of *mire*, and the *stepping stones* at a great distance. Was not this well said?

I am glad to find that you are to have Mrs. Montagu at Bath; if you are with her there, you will have more of her in a week than you can have of her in a month in London, which seldom affords us more of those whose company we love than just what is enough to tantalize one, and make one wish for better opportunities of seeing them.

Mrs. Pepys desires me to remember her to you in the kindest manner.

Much yours,

W. W. PEPYS.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Carter.

Bristol, 1784.

How kind and generous is it in you, my dearest Mrs. Carter, to consult my wishes, rather than my deserts, and to give me the pleasure of receiving such a delightful letter from you, so much sooner than I could reasonably hope for it. I hope the speediness of my reply will not make you repent your indulgence. *Faire des heureux*, is one of the highest privileges of our nature; and I assure you that you exercise that prerogative in no low degree, whenever you write to me or talk to me.

The abolition of franks is quite a serious affliction to me; not that I shall ever regret paying the postage for my friends' letters, but for fear it should restrain them from writing. It is a tax upon the free currency of affection and sentiment, and goes nearer my heart than the cruel decision against literary property did; for that was only taxing the *manufacture*, but this the raw *material*.

I believe I forgot to mention that I had disposed of part of your bounty to the poor woman. Mrs. Palmer, the bookseller, speaks highly of her honesty and sobriety, but says that her pride is so great, that she will let nobody know where she lodges; and it is but seldom that she can prevail upon her to eat, when she calls upon her, though she knows her at the time to be near perishing. I could not but smile at the absurd notions people entertain of right and wrong; for this pre-

posterous pride Mrs. Palmer seemed to think a noble *fierté*. However I have made her *condescend* to promise that if she should have a dangerous sickness, or be confined to her bed, she would vouchsafe to let me know the place of her abode, that she might not die of want; and yet all this pride pretends to a great deal of religion. Poor creatures! not to know that humility is the foundation of virtue; and that pride is as incompatible with piety towards God, as it is with the repose of our own hearts.

I have read the first volume only of *Les Veillées du Château*. What a surprising talent that woman has, of making every thing that passes through her hands interesting; the barrenest and most unpromising subjects 'she turns to favour and prettiness,' Yet this is the woman with whom, I am told upon unquestionable authority, I must not cultivate a friendship. Can it be possible, my dear friend, that she who labours with so much ability and success in the great vineyard of education, should herself be deficient in the most important qualities which she so skilfully paints, and so powerfully recommends? What motives for humiliation, for self-distrust, and circumspection in one's own conduct does such a character suggest to me! I am never so effectually humbled as in contemplating the defects of a shining character. So far from feeling any interior joy that the distance between them and me seems to be lessened, I am deeply alarmed, lest those of my own actions which seem the least exceptionable, should either proceed from wrong motives, or be a cover for false principles,

And I do assure you, my dear Mrs. Carter, with all the truth of sincere friendship, that one of my deepest causes of uneasiness is, lest I should deceive others, and especially myself, as to the motives of my own actions. It is so easy to practice a creditable degree of seeming virtue, and so difficult to purify and direct the affections of the heart, that I feel myself in continual danger of appearing better than I am; and I verily believe it is possible to make one's whole life a display of splendid virtues and agreeable qualities, without ever setting one's foot towards the narrow path, or even one's face towards the strait gate.

I hope we shall not lose Miss Hamilton entirely out of London; and I long for the decision of that point: but whatever will be most prudent and proper for her, I shall acquiesce in.

Yours, my dear Madam,

Most faithfully, H. M.

Sandleford Priory, 1784.

MY DEAR MRS. CARTER,

The date will discover to you that I write from the delightful abode of our delightful friend. There is an irregular beauty and greatness in the new buildings, and in the cathedral aisles which open to the great gothic window, which is exceedingly agreeable to the imagination. It is solemn without being sad, and gothic without being gloomy. Last night by a bright moon-light, I enjoyed this singular scenery most feelingly; it shone in all its glory; but I was at a loss with what beings to people it; it

was too awful for fairies, and not dismal enough for ghosts. There is a great propriety in its belonging to the champion of Shakspeare, for like him it is not only beautiful without rules, but almost in defiance of them. I have been such a stroller, that I have hardly done so serious a thing as to write a letter during the whole bright and pleasant month of September. I spent that month at the house of a friend, in one of the most enchanting vales of Somersetshire. The surrounding scenery was so lovely, so full of innocent wildness, that I do not know any place that ever caught such hold of my imagination. If spring is the poet's season, it must be allowed that autumn is the painter's. Such delicious warmth in the colouring of the woods! Every morning I rode through the most delightful vallies, or crept along the sides of the most beautiful hanging woods, where the blue smoke ascending from the cleanest white cottages in the world, had the prettiest effect imaginable: it was a sort of thin grey ether, a kind of poetical smoke, which seemed too pretty to be connected with the useful,—very unlike the gross, substantial culinary vapour which suggests ideas only of corporeal and common things. But most devoutly did I wish for you, one day that I passed in a narrow and deep valley under a vast ledge of rocks, so lofty and stupendous as to impress the mind with ideas the most solemn and romantic. They were shaped by nature into forms the most astonishing and fantastic, exactly resembling Gothic castles and ruined abbeys; which brought with them a train of broken images, wild

and amazing, or awful and affecting, as the scenes succeeded each other. But I was exceedingly touched, when sitting down on a huge fragment of rock, some of the company performed one of Gray's wildest odes, in a style of taste and feeling which made the happiest accompaniment imaginable to the scenery.

You, my dear Madam, who enjoy whatever is exquisite in poetical composition, or delightful in natural objects, with all your first enthusiasm, would have greatly enjoyed this spot—and I am sure my enjoyment would have been doubled by having it so participated.

Mrs. Ord called and drank tea with us last night, in her way to Bath. She brings a good account of our common friends who are still in town—'the leavings of Pharsalia.' The Veseys are to set out to-day for Margate, the Pepyses for Tunbridge. Miss Hamilton's marriage, Mrs. Garrick tells me, is going on prosperously. May she be as happy as she deserves, which I take to be a warm wish.

I see, or rather feel, that there is no perfect happiness in this world; for instead of enjoying my favourite Gothic arch as completely as I ought to do, I am continually thinking to myself—I wish Mrs. Carter or Mr. Smelt, or one or other of the higher order of beings were enjoying this with me; that would double my gratification.

Adieu, my dearest Mrs. Carter; there is not a person in the world who loves and honours you with a warmer heart than

Your faithful and obliged, H. M.

From H. More to her sister.

Adelphi, 1784.

You ask after Lælius. He is such a favourite with great and learned ladies, that he is generally fastened down by one or other of them, and though he does now and then make some struggles for his liberty, it cannot always be obtained. Whereas Horace, liking nonsense-talk better than to be always with the Greek and Romans, I sometimes get more than my share of him, as was the case at a most complete *bas bleu* the other night at Mrs. Vesey's, where was every thing witty and every thing learned that is to be had; but I generally stick by my old friends; so got into a nook, between Mr. Walpole and Mr. Jenyns, and was contented. I am very humble, you will say. The next night I was in a different scene, a most splendid assembly at the Bishop of St. Asaph's. The Prince of Wales was there. He was reckoned to come excessively early—half-past ten; you will judge what a time it was before we got away, though it was only a *private* party of about two hundred, and I believe the Bishop was heartily glad when he got rid of us. For my part, I do not desire to be ever again in such a crowd, whether of the great vulgar or the small!

Saturday I had a most pleasant afternoon with Mrs. Delany and the Duchess of Portland, who now begin to get up their spirits, which have been greatly depressed by the loss of Lady Mansfield. There was a friendship of sixty years' standing

between them. On Tuesday we dined with a man-party: a very pleasant lord, and a very merry judge, though that is against the proverb. And, on Friday, we had a small but very rational party at Mrs. Burrows's.

From the same to the same.

London, 1784.

At length we have been to breathe two or three days' fresh air at Hampton, where I literally dwelt among the lilacs. It was charming weather, only excessively hot. This is something like May—the *old May* of the poets. I should be very glad to be still in the country, but Mrs. G. has business in town. I was quite worn out last week with visiting—dined out six days following. It was well Sunday came to my relief, but it is all over now; and now I may very philosophically cry out, with Wolsey—

Vain pomp and glory of the world! I hate ye!

He did not, however, renounce it while he could keep it, nor complain of it while he could enjoy it; and I am afraid I am a little in the same way; not absolutely though, for I do refuse far more invitations than I accept.

Lord Bathurst has lent me a very entertaining collection of original letters, from Pope, Bolingbroke, Swift, Queen Mary, &c. and has promised to make me a present of anything I like out of them. I cannot say these communications have

given me a very great idea of Queen Mary's head; but her heart, I am persuaded, was a very good one. The defect must have been in her education; for such spelling and such English I never saw; romantic and childish too, as to sentiment. My reverence for her many virtues leads me to hope she was very young when she wrote them.

Mrs. Vesey begged me most earnestly on Tuesday to meet a very small and choice party, which was made for Mrs. Delany and the Duchess of Portland. I dined with Mrs. Boscawen, and we went together. I had a great deal of chat with Mr. Burke, and so lively, and so foolish, and so good-humoured was he, and so like the agreeable Mr. Burke I once knew and admired, that I soon forgot his malefactions, and how often I had been in a passion with him for some of his speeches. He talked a great deal of politics with General Oglethorpe. He told him, with great truth, that he looked upon him as a more extraordinary person than any he had read of, for that he had founded the province of Georgia; had absolutely called it into existence, and had lived to see it severed from the empire which created it, and become an independent state. I could have added,—whose wicked eloquence was it that helped to bring about this mighty revolution? and by his looks, I believe the venerable Nestor had the same thought. Yesterday was dear Mrs. Delany's birthday, and I went to pay my congratulations; very hearty they were, and very cordially were they accepted. She had received company all the morning; had a party at

dinner, and spent the evening with the king and queen, who insisted that they should have her company on her birth-day; how pretty! and yesterday they took care to get her a place where she could enjoy the Handel Commemoration without danger or fatigue. Think of this astonishing woman's being able to go through all this at fourscore. She had formed a little project to surprise us here on Saturday; we had a great deal of company, all the blues, and Mrs. Delany happening to hear of it, intended to appear unexpectedly, which would have delighted everybody, but something happened to spoil her scheme, and then she told us of it. We have been, for a few days, at Mrs. Bouverie's, at Teston. I never was in such an earthly Paradise. The park, the house, the garden, are all delightful; and nothing can exceed the goodness of the inhabitants, whose whole lives are spent in acts of beneficence. I hope you have been clever and industrious enough to discover some new little retired delightful spots for our gipsy frolics.[1]

[1] This alludes to those rural rambles which formed their chief amusements during the holidays, when furnished with their work-bags stored with provisions and books, they passed a few hours in the enjoyment of the open air, and the delightful scenery of the Clifton Rocks, King's Weston, &c.

CHAPTER IV.

DURING Hannah More's residence with her sisters at Bristol in the summer of this year, 1784, an extraordinary object was presented to the benevolence of the family. Their cook informed them that the person who called daily for the kitchen-stuff, for the maintenance of her pig, was, with her husband and several children, absolutely perishing with hunger; and drew such a picture of their distress, as excited their liveliest compassion. They lost no time in endeavouring to rescue this wretched family; and soon discovered that the woman was possessed of extraordinary talents, which not even the last stage of famine and misery could repress. She produced several scraps of her poetry, in which were striking indications of genius. It immediately occurred to Miss H. More that this talent might be made the means of exciting a general interest in her behalf, and raising a fund to set her up in some creditable way of earning her subsistence. She accordingly took a great deal of pains in furnishing her with some of the common rules of writing, spelling, and composition; and while the

object of her charity was preparing, under her inspection, a small collection of poems, she was employing herself in writing statements of the case to all her friends of rank and fortune, bespeaking subscriptions to this work, and setting forth the probability of being enabled, after allowing the woman a certain portion of the sum raised, to apprentice out the children with the remainder. The generous zeal with which Miss H. More's friends seconded her wishes, soon produced a sum exceeding £600. which was placed in the funds under the trusteeship of Mrs. Montagu and herself. During thirteen months, her time was chiefly engrossed by her exertions in this woman's cause, in whose service, she has been heard to say, she calculated that in transcribing and correcting her poems, and in letters of application, she had written more than a thousand pages.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Sandleford, 1784.

MY DEAR MADAM,

How many taxes are to be paid before one friend can write, and another friend receive her letter? Human life is subject to duties and customs of various kinds. In vain have I often said to myself, this day I will write to my dear Miss More; a friend arrives; a visitant drops in; some business occurs; some incident intrudes, and night leaves only the power of renewing the dream, the unsubstantial dream of to-morrow's performance. I

have longed to express to you, in some degree, how bitterly I felt my disappointment of the happiness I had in the prospect of your company, and, how by an accident, I was deceived in my expectation of my Lord Primate. Just after his grace wrote me word that Sir William Robinson and he would be at Sandleford in three or four days, a hurt he had received in his finger inflamed to such a degree, that he was obliged to put it under the care of an eminent surgeon in London, who held him by it a long time. Sir William Robinson, who has the least moral bitterness in his composition of any one I ever knew, had, nevertheless, an overflowing of the gall, which he thought would be soonest removed by an apothecary in town, who is well acquainted with his constitution. These gentlemen of the faculty promised both my friends a much speedier cure than they effected; so my expectations were kept waiting from day to day. They arrived at last, safe and sound, but not till Mrs. Garrick was gone, and the time you could have bestowed on me was elapsed.

Now, having told my melancholy tale, let me come to the wondrous story of the milkwoman. Indeed, she is one of nature's miracles. What force of imagination! what harmony of numbers! In Pagan times, one could have supposed Apollo had fallen in love with her rosy cheek, snatched her to the top of Mount Parnassus, given her a glass of his best helicon, and ordered the nine muses to attend her call: but, as this heathen fiction will not pass now, let us consider whether Christian faith

may not serve better. I imagine her mind has been enlightened and enlarged by the study of the scriptures. In the prophets, in Job, and in the Psalms, there is a character of thought, and style of expression, between eloquence and poetry, from which a great mind, disposed to either, may be so elevated, and so warmed, as, with little other assistance, to become an orator or poet. The New Testament would purify the heart, and the hope of immortality raise the mind above all earthly cares, and all wishes bounded by mortal existence. Her native fire has not been damped by a load of learning. Flame is extinguished by throwing on it matter which does not contain any igneous particles. Avaunt! grammarians; stand away! logicians; far, far away, all heathen ethics and mythology, geometry, and algebra, and make room for the Bible and Milton when a poet is to be made. The proud philosopher ends far short of what has been revealed to the simple in our religion. Wonder not, therefore, if our humble dame rises above Pindar, or steps beyond Æschylus. I do not mean to affirm that such geniuses as do not want the help of art, instruction, and study, are not rare, but the temple of Jerusalem and the holy mount may form them, without the portico or the academic groves. I should have felt as much pain as delight from the fine stanzas you sent me, if you had not, at the same time, assured me you had taken care this noble creature should not want the little comforts of life. I shall most joyfully contribute toward procuring them for her.

Orders to be given for building and planting will detain me here till the 29th, then, my dear Madam, I will get the room well aired. Whether my house will be in the Circus or Queen's Parade, I do not yet know; but I know that when you come to it I shall think it the best furnished house any where. Montagu begs me to present his most sincere and affectionate respects. Mine attend all your family. If you should be told that Sandleford was on fire one night, answer that the fire was extinguished without damage. I have not room to say more on the subject.

From the same to the same.

Sandleford, 1784.

DEAR MADAM,

By a variety, and to me of most vexatious blunders, Lactilla's poems did not arrive here till last night, and then by a conveyance the most unworthy of a muse—a broad-wheeled stage waggon. Pegasus, I know, disdains to go on the turnpike-road; so, though he carries Lactilla rapidly through the regions of imagination, it could not be expected that he would call at the printer's to take up her works. But their being made to wait till a great box of vulgar articles should be ready to set out in the waggon, was a treatment of which they would have been very undeserving, even if they had not been enriched, adorned, and ennobled, by your incomparable prefatory letter. It is impossible to tell you how much that letter charmed me. That I should

be happy in your partial opinion of me, and proud of the public testimony of your friendship, is not to be wondered at; but I have some merit in being so delighted with what you have said on Shakspeare; for your short paragraph does more justice to his talents than all that we, who have written volumes *about him and about him*, have been able to do. Indeed, my dear Madam, it is the essence and quintessence of all we have written; and whoever would perfectly understand the powers and genius of Shakspeare need only read that passage of your introductory letter. Ideas so just, language so happy, that if I were writing to any one but yourself, I should fill my whole letter with nothing but my admiration of it. But I know you attend with more pleasure to whatever reflects honour on others than yourself; so I will only say, it is great merit in me to be pleased when I feel myself excelled.

I have been, for some days past, in a great deal of anxiety about Mrs. Garrick. I wrote her a letter, in which I told her, that before Montagu's marriage I would make her a visit to Hampton, if she was not otherwise engaged. To this letter I have not had any answer; nor have I heard from you since I wrote to you after my first coming to Sandleford. Surely if you were both well, one of you would have written. I shall direct this to the Adelphi, for I think you would not have been so cruel as to have passed by Newbury without calling upon me.

I live in the most perfect sequestration from all the world. If you pass this way it will be charity

to call; and I can give you a well-aired bed, though my house is not yet got into order, but the hammers are not so noisy as when I first came.

I am very solicitous to hear how Mr. Vesey has provided for one who made him an affectionate wife, and is his disconsolate widow.

My letter to Mrs. Garrick was directed to Hampton, which induces me to direct this to London, hoping it may meet a kinder fate.

From the same to the same.

Sandleford, 1784.

DEAR MADAM,

Your letters would make one amends for any thing but the loss of your conversation. So greedy of perfect delight is the human heart, that I regretted the absence of the friend, even while I enjoyed the pleasure of her correspondence. The kind assurance you gave me, that you passed your time agreeably here, encourages me to hope for a longer visit next year. The sweetest reveries are composed of recollection of the agreeable past, and hopes of the happy future; and I thank you most sincerely for the days you have given up, and those I hope you will bestow upon me. Indeed words cannot express the delightful impressions you left behind you. Montagu and I often talk over those happy days with grateful pleasure.

Dr. Beattie and his son did not stay near so long with us as I had hoped; the Doctor's physicians having ordered him to take a course of sea-bathing,

before his duties, as a professor, call him to the university at Aberdeen. His wife's unhappy state of mind, and his own great application to study, have sadly affected his spirits and health; and his son, yet a boy, partly perhaps by sympathy with a sick father, and partly by constitution, is much more serious and grave than one would wish so young a person, or indeed any one to be; for though I honour the precept which teaches to be wise and merry, I think to be merry when wise is nearly as good doctrine. The Doctor's *Edwin is no vulgar boy;* he is an admirable scholar; has uncommon talents and a most excellent heart. A little folly, whisked up into a light froth of youthful gaiety, would be what I should ask of *les jeux et les ris* for him, rather than any further favours Minerva or the learned Nine could bestow.

I am surprised and charmed with your account of the poetical milk-woman. After having considered her character with admiration, a certain selfish principle (which can never be long suspended) suggested to me, that I might obtain great pleasure if I could be the means of promoting her prosperity, I beg of you to inform yourself, as much as you can, of her temper, disposition, and moral character. I speak not this out of an apprehension of merely wasting a few guineas, but lest I should do harm where I intend to confer benefit. It has sometimes happened to me, that, by an endeavour to encourage talents and cherish virtue, by driving from them the terrifying spectre of pale poverty, I have introduced a legion of little demons: vanity, luxury,

idleness, and pride, have entered the cottage the moment poverty vanished. However, I am sure despair is never a good counsellor; and I desire you to be so good as to tell her, that I entreat her, in any distress, to apply to me, and she may be assured of immediate assistance.

The Primate of Ireland has been at Sundridge ever since he left Sandleford, and I believe, from some other engagements, he cannot be here before the end, or, at soonest, the middle of next month; so I wrote yesterday to Mrs. Garrick, to endeavour to prevail on her to take a trip to Sandleford, for her room is now vacant, and so is yours; and you are just those persons of whom one never can say, their room is as good as their company. Hampton is but two stages from Sandleford; Bristol, I confess, is more distant; but should you make a visit at Dr. Stonehouse's, I might entertain hopes you would allow me to send my post-chaise to fetch you.

Affectionately yours,

E. MONTAGU.

The person alluded to in the preceding letter, was equally a stranger to gratitude and prudence; and inflated by the notice she had attracted, soon began, to express, in the coarsest terms, her rage and disappointment, at not having the sum subscribed immediately put into her hands. Neither could she bear, as it seems, to be represented to the public, in Miss More's preface to her work, as an object of their charity. Not being able to gain her point, she soon broke out into the bitterest invectives, and

scrupled at no calumnies however absurd and ferocious. We will produce a specimen. The late Duchess of Devonshire having presented her with 'Bell's Edition of the Poets,' Miss H. More kept them for her till she should be able to find a few second-hand shelves to place them on. Mrs. Yearsley immediately wrote to her Grace, complaining that they were kept back from her, at the same time spreading a report in the neighbourhood, that her patroness was purchasing an estate with the sum she had pretended to raise for her benefit. Mrs. Montagu and Miss More resisted with great patience her violent importunities to be put in possession of the principal, as well as interest, of her little fortune; fearing it would be consumed in those vices, to which it now began to be apparent that she was addicted. But at length they gave it up into the hands of a respectable lawyer, who made it over to a rich and honourable merchant of Bristol; and he was soon harassed into the relinquishment of the whole concern. Miss More, as may well be imagined, never took the trouble of vindicating herself, nor did she manifest any resentment towards this unfortunate creature, with respect to whom she had no other feeling than that of Christian sorrow for her depravity.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

Audley Street, 1784.

I am in a little care about you, my dear friend: I cannot be sure that you are not vexed, hurt, and

made uneasy by that odious woman; the trouble she had given you of another kind, little prognosticated what she would give you now. I really think this passes common depravity!

You know perhaps that the bonne Vesey, for whose future short days one cannot but be much interested, will have about £800. or £900. a-year, and Mrs. Handcock £400.

Last night there was a *bal royal* at the queen's house, in one room for children, which was begun by the Princess Mary, and *my* Princess Elizabeth; in the saloon, for grown gentlemen and ladies, viz. three princesses, four princes, and *l'élite de la noblesse* of both sexes. His majesty minded only the little ones, whom he ranged and matched, and was quite delighted with their performance, requiring the queen to come and see how well they danced. Her majesty sat on a sofa between the Duchesses of Beaufort and Marlborough. The king took a world of care of his little people; charged them not to drink anything cold, and shewed them where they might always find tea, &c. &c. They supped very *properly*, and departed about one: the king still guarding them, told the mothers to call for their cloaks, and to wrap them up well before they went down. The other ball and fine supper continued till the sun had been up some time. The Prince of Wales was there, *et en prince, et en bon fils.*

And do you suppose, my dear madam, that your poor ignorant friend will attack such a body of science as you send me in Lord Monboddo? far

be it from me to be so presumptuous. I have read the preface, which I admire exceedingly, and now I fulfil the prophecy therein contained, viz. that the mere title will frighten many from opening the book. I am of this number, except that I have peeped a little (with a curiosity perfectly female) at dreams, phantasia, and second sight. Methinks our learned friend, *penetré de son système*, must be very willing, and even glad to die: and as he is threescore years and ten, it pleases me to think so.

Sad weather for your peripatetic philosophers. perhaps I do not spell the name of the sect right; *n'importe.*

Yours, with the sincerest affection,

F. B.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Sandleford, 1784.

DEAR MADAM,

Mr. Parsons of Bath having, without orders, sent my gothic stone ornaments to London, I have not any occasion to send a carriage to Bath for them. I imagine my house in Portman Square will be as much offended at the arrival of gothic ornaments, as a court beau would be if a hatter sent him a quaker's broad-brimmed beaver. They were designed to adorn the west-front of Sandleford, of gothic structure, and to signify to all who approached it, that ancient simplicity and hospitality resided there, and a homely and sincere reception awaited them, if they would do the mis-

tress of the mansion the favour to walk in. These pinnacles on the battlements invite to roast beef and plumb pudding, but could never allure to a *thé*.

I am truly grieved for Mrs. Garrick's loss of her little darling: greater sorrow attends the loss of our hopes, perhaps, than even the deprivation of our most valuable possessions, and never does hope clothe itself in such a perfect form of beauty as in an infant. We dress it out with every excellence, and fashion it to the utmost degree of perfection. I wrote to solicit her to come to Sandleford, where sympathy would share and console her sorrow; for when I would reason with her on the subject, she could not say *she speaks to one who never lost a child.* I have this morning received a letter from her, in which she tells me she is engaged at present, but gives me hopes, that between this time and autumn, she will give me the pleasure of seeing her. It would add much to my happiness, and her consolation, if you would meet her. I feel great wrath and indignation at your Missy; great is the injury she has done at Mongewell and Sandleford; so great, that no punishment could be adequate to it but what she incurred by losing an opportunity of passing some days with you. She has deprived herself of what we regret, though perhaps her loss does not bear any proportion to our's, for there are some ears which the lute of Apollo would not charm more than the bagpipe of a pedlar.

I rejoice with you that we are soon to be free from any connection with the milkwoman. I have

the same opinion about favours to the ungrateful-minded, as the common people have in regard to witches, that bestowing a gift on such wretches gives them power over one; but for all that, I shall never be discouraged from giving to the distressed person of talents while I have anything to give: but I can only assist the woman, you can help the poet; your patronage is therefore worth infinitely more than my alms, and I grieve that you have given her so much precious thought and precious time. I should always, even from a selfish principle, wish rather to be the dupe of another's hypocrisy than of my own suspicion. The dupes of suspicion are cheated of the best things in human society, confidence and benevolence. I know these very persons think themselves wondrous wise, but they cannot be merry and wise if their wisdom is always apprehensive of deceit and guile.

Mrs. Yearsley's conceit that you can envy her talents gives me comfort; for as it convinces me that she is mad, I build upon it a hope that she is not guilty in the all-seeing eye.

Our dear Vesey has been very ill, owing, she tells me, to eating unripe fruit; but, thank God, she is getting well again. You make her very happy when you favour her with a letter, and, poor thing, she is in a very dejected state, so it is an act of charity to write to her. She is charmed with your description of your cottage, and wishes much to be mistress of one, and I will endeavour next summer to search one out in this neighbour-

hood: she would be amused with fitting it up: in the possession of it, when finished, I am afraid she would be disappointed; a cottage affords a sweet retreat to the contented mind, or a charming indulgence *to the scholar's melancholy, which is fantastical*, but affords little diversion to real sorrow, connected with departed friends, and substantial evils arising from the course of human things.

My nephew and his amiable wife left me yesterday morning, to fulfil an engagement they had made with the York family, to spend some weeks at Lymington: the loss of two such lively good-humoured young persons makes my house appear very dull;—there is now no noise of mirth,

Save the cricket on the hearth.

You hardly inquire after what has been done at this place since you saw it. I seem to have copied the mode of modern parents—I have embellished the external, and neglected the furnishing of the internal: the pleasure grounds are much improved since you were here. The view to new beauties is opened, and some ugly old buildings are taken away; but the circumstance of the ill-built chimnies made it impossible to get the house into good habitable order this summer. I beg that you would not make any apologies for having interested me for *l'ingrate;* it is impossible a heart like yours should form to itself the idea of such a creature. *Goodness thinks no ill where no ill seems.*

I beg you to present my compliments to all your

family; assure them I have not forgotten the agreeable day I passed with them.

I am impatient to hear that you think of coming to town. If any old maiden at Bristol keeps parrots or macaws, I should be very glad of their cast-off clothes, or any gay feathers, to adorn the feather-work which is going on here.

I am, dear Madam,
with most affectionate esteem,
Yours,
E. MONTAGU.

Miss H. More again paid her customary visit to Mrs. Garrick, at the latter end of this year, 1784, the few first weeks of which she passed, as usual, at Hampton, in such seclusion as to furnish few incidents to enliven her correspondence.

Hampton, December, 1784.

Poor dear Johnson! he is past all hope. The dropsy has brought him to the point of death; his legs have been scarified: but nothing will do. I have, however, the comfort to hear that his dread of dying is in a great measure subdued; and now he says "the bitterness of death is past." He sent the other day for Sir Joshua; and after much serious conversation told him he had three favours to beg of him, and he hoped he would not refuse a dying friend, be they what they would. Sir Joshua promised. The first was, that he would never paint on a Sunday; the second, that he would forgive him thirty pounds that he had lent him, as he

wanted to leave them to a distressed family; the third was, that he would read the Bible whenever he had an opportunity; and that he would never omit it on a Sunday. There was no difficulty but upon the *first* point; but at length, Sir Joshua promised to gratify him in all. How delighted should I be to hear the dying discourse of this great and good man, especially now that faith has subdued his fears. I wish I could see him.

As the very interesting particulars contained in the following letter, found among Mrs. H. More's papers, may not be generally known, we shall perhaps be excused for interrupting the series of her letters by its insertion.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I ought to apologize for delaying so long to gratify your wishes and fulfil my promise, by committing to paper a conversation which I had with the late Rev. Mr. Storry, of Colchester, respecting Dr. Johnson. I will now, however, proceed at once to record, to the best of my recollection, the substance of our discourse.

We were riding together near Colchester, when I asked Mr. Storry whether he had ever heard that Dr. Johnson expressed great dissatisfaction with himself on the approach of death; and that in reply to friends, who, in order to comfort him spoke of his writings in defence of virtue and religion, he had said, 'admitting all you urge to be true, how can I tell when I have done enough.'

Mr. S. assured me that what I had just mentioned was perfectly correct; and then added the following interesting particulars.

Dr. Johnson, said he, did feel as you describe, and was not to be comforted by the ordinary topics of consolation which were addressed to him. In consequence he desired to see a clergyman, and particularly described the views and character of the person whom he wished to consult. After some consideration, a Mr. Winstanley was named, and the Dr. requested Sir John Hawkins to write a note in his name, requesting Mr. W.'s attendance as a minister.

Mr. W. who was in a very weak state of health, was quite overpowered on receiving the note, and felt appalled by the very thought of encountering the talents and learning of Dr. Johnson. In his embarrassment he went to his friend Colonel Pownall, and told him what had happened, asking, at the same time, for his advice how to act. The Colonel, who was a pious man, urged him immediately to follow what appeared to be a remarkable leading of Providence, and for the time argued his friend out of his nervous apprehension: but after he had left Colonel Pownall, Mr. W.'s fears returned in so great a degree as to prevail upon him to abandon the thought of a personal interview with the Dr. He determined in consequence to write him a letter: that letter I think Mr. Storry said he had seen,—at least a copy of it, and part of it he repeated to me as follows:—

Sir—I beg to acknowledge the honour of your

note, and am very sorry that the state of my health prevents my compliance with your request: but my nerves are so shattered that I feel as if I should be quite confounded by your presence, and instead of promoting, should only injure the cause in which you desire my aid. Permit me therefore to write what I should wish to say were I present. I can easily conceive what would be the subjects of your inquiry. I can conceive that the views of yourself have changed with your condition, and that on the near approach of death, what you once considered mere peccadilloes have risen into mountains of guilt, whilst your best actions have dwindled into nothing. On whichever side you look, you see only positive transgressions or defective obedience; and hence, in self-despair are eagerly inquiring. "What shall I do to be saved?" I say to you, in the language of the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God!" &c. &c.

When Sir John Hawkins came to this part of Mr. W.'s letter, the Dr. interrupted him, anxiously asking, '*Does he say so?* Read it again! Sir John.' Sir John complied: upon which the Dr. said, 'I must see that man; write again to him.' A second note was accordingly sent: but even this repeated solicitation could not prevail over Mr. Winstanley's fears. He was led, however, by it to write again to the Doctor, renewing and enlarging upon the subject of his first letter; and these communications, together with the conversation of the late Mr. Latrobe, who was a particular friend of Dr. Johnson, appear to have been blessed by God in bringing this great man to the renunciation of self, and a

simple reliance on Jesus as his Saviour, thus also communicating to him that peace which he had found the world could not give, and which, when the world was fading from his view, was sufficient to fill the void, and dissipate the gloom, even of the valley of the shadow of death.

I cannot conclude without remarking what honour God has hereby put upon the doctrine of faith in a crucified Saviour. The man whose intellectual powers had awed all around him, was in his turn made to tremble, when the period arrived at which all knowledge appears useless, and vanishes away, except the knowledge of the true God, and of Jesus Christ, whom he has sent. Effectually to attain this knowledge, this giant in literature must become a little child. The man looked up to as a prodigy of wisdom, must become a fool that he might be wise.

What a comment is this upon that word, "The loftiness of men shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

From Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Hampton, January 7, 1785.

I hope you have got the better of the poetical indigestion you must have experienced at Thames Ditton,[1] from my having crammed you with bad verses. Unluckily for you and my other gentle readers, within an hour after we parted I began to exhibit

[1] At the Hon. Mrs. Boyle Walsingham's.

an exact imitation of Mrs. Garrick's cold, which I copied so successfully in all its parts, that I might have passed for the original, if she had not coughed and croaked precisely in the same hoarse note before me. Now this having confined me a close prisoner to my room ever since, there has been of course

> Room for writing verses e'en to madness,
> Till the pen split with copying.

Now if I were able to *walk*, you may believe I should never write a line while there was a gleam of sun, or a blade of grass, to cheer my heart, or delight my eyes. But as I cannot walk, I must write, and you must read: the consequence is not pleasant, but it is logical; and so if I act reasonably I care not if you be punished barbarously. Yet I think I have spent my time as harmlessly as any of you. While you are talking crabbed politics, I am reducing perverse syllables to obedience. Some of your wits have spent their time worse. I had rather be Cinna[1] the poet, than Cinna the conspirator: and if I *must be torn*, I had rather it were for my bad verses, than for my malefactions.

But to come to business, which I meant to have done long ago. By the bye, I do not think you will find time to read this idle stuff till summer, so I would have you desire Mrs. Pepys to pack it up, unread, among the things that are to go to Tonbridge, and there I suppose you are now and then furiously at leisure, as I am at this moment, to your misfortune. Oh! how you fret, and wish

[1] See Shakspeare's Julius Cæsar.

it were the rheumatism in my hand, or a defluxion in my eyes, which confined me! But I have done wandering from the matter in hand—and now for the verses. What, verses again?

'She stops my chariot and she boards my barge.'

Well, but you must correct me now, for your own credit, or I will serve you as the milkwoman did me, and declare that all the bad lines are yours.

Do you still persist in the opinion that my name must 'stand Rubric on the Post,' and that Bas Bleu should be also printed?

I have been brushing the dust off these blue stockings a little, and have added a few stitches to them. Pray look at my work; perhaps you will say, I had better have let it alone. I always say too much. If I had fallen into the hands of Procrustes, I should never have been *stretched* on his bed, but for *curtailment;* Oh dear! what continual amputation! There would always have been too much of me, and I should have grown out again under his chopping-knife. I could not resist the temptation of bringing my great favourites Joseph of Winton, and Thomas of Oxenford into the amiable society at Mr. Vesey's. Still less could I resist making the *eloge* of wit suppressed from reverence to virtue; a merit so great and so obvious that I am surprised not to have seen it mentioned by any writer that I recollect. Do not spare me—the only merit I have is the delight I take in being corrected; and the next praise to *being* good is the desire of *becoming* so.

Kind compliments to Mrs. Pepys. Mrs. Garrick sends her's.

Pray return this by post to Hampton as soon as you have made it better.

Your's faithfully,

H. More.

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

Wimpole Street, 1785.

My dear Madam,

I am particularly glad of this opportunity of telling you how much every body is pleased with your prefatory letter to Mrs. Montagu, and how much I envy you the part you have taken with regard to the milk-woman; which *you*, at least, will remember with more pleasure than the finest verses or the best written scene you ever composed. Her account of the state of her own mind, is the part of her poems which pleases me best, and is extremely curious. The consciousness of extraordinary powers unable to exert themselves (as she seems to conceive,) from the insuperable barrier of ignorance with which her mind is surrounded, and which it is perpetually struggling to surmount, is a new and very interesting representation. Something like this I have frequently observed in a child, who has been conscious of more mind than might be expected from its years, and who has seemed to feel that it was only withheld by the imbecility of its age from saying or doing something above the reach of a child's

capacity. When this consciousness is observed at such a time of life as to admit of improvement, it is always a very promising symptom; but when it appears, as I have seen it, in the decline of life, and is accompanied by the remorse of having misspent the season of improvement, it affords a most melancholy subject of contemplation. I remember a friend of mine, of extraordinary natural powers, the cultivation of which had been totally neglected, listening to the discourse of a man of highly cultivated understanding, and saying with a sigh and a smile, 'You and I, methinks, united, would make a perfect man; you understand every thing but a horse, and I, alas! nothing else.'

When do you go to Cowslip Green? and what book shall I send you towards fitting up your library? To send you a skimming-dish, or a fish-kettle, towards setting-up *housekeeping*, would be making too little distinction between you and the next good housewife in the parish; but if you would be so good as to tell me any pleasant companion, who is not already of your party, I should have a particular pleasure in sending him, post-haste, after you; and should be very much flattered with the idea that some long evening he might recal me to your memory.

With much regard,
I am yours,
W. W. PEPYS.[1]

[1] This letter appears to have been written in ignorance of the bad conduct of Mrs. Yearsley.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

Most sincere are my congratulations on the health and safety of your very amiable lady. The interval must have been painful and anxious, but I thank God that the termination has been so happy. I am always glad when a numerous family happens (though, by the bye, I am persuaded that nothing *happens*) to be sent into a quarter where I am sure they will be well educated. Where this is the case, I have always remarked, in my small observation of human life, that large families were more virtuous, more happy, and even, as to the things of this world, more prosperous, than those in which there is a single solitary cub to plague his parents, despise his tutors, and torment his dependants. Such a little opulent important animal I have seldom known escape the miseries of an education which is poisoned in the very springs.

I have the mortification to find that my cottage will not be ready for me this summer. I spent the day there on Monday, and the wizard of the mountain brewed up a glorious storm for me. To the most magnificent thunder was added the literal completion of that fine description. "If he do but touch the mountains they shall smoke." This smoke was the consequence of the most violent rains falling on the parched and burning hills, and furnished a more sublime and poetic delight than the brightest

day could have bestowed. But *one* day of such enjoyment is enough. All sublimities should be short; the mind cannot be transported long, and it is glad to recover its natural and ordinary train: a passive sort of content is the best state.

I shall be greatly obliged to you for the book you are so good as to propose to send me. I am fitting up a tiny boudoir at Cowslip Green, which I intend shall contain no literature but the offerings of kindness; by this means my imagination will convert my little closet into a temple of friendship; and when the weather is bad, or my spirits low, what a cordial it will be to fancy that I am loved and esteemed by so many amiable and worthy people as have there contributed to my instruction and delight! I am mightily at a loss to know what book *you* shall give me; I have been thinking these two hours to no purpose. What think you of a cookery book? No, that won't do either, for that will introduce sauces, and luxury, and all manner of cunningly-devised dishes and extravagant inventions, into a little cottage devoted to simplicity, and from which aspiring thoughts and luxurious desires are to be entirely excluded. I should beg a wooden spoon and a maple dish, but that it is pleasanter to one's friends to be remembered in one's more intellectual hours. What say you to a book I have seen advertised, called *The way to be rich and respectable?* Such a work, I think, might help to counteract the evil effects of some of its poetical neighbours, which suggest vain fancies and high imaginations. But pray take notice, it must not be a *fine new* book out

of a shop; that would destroy the charm, which lies in this, that the book must be transplanted from the library of the friend.

I happen to have so much acquaintance at the Wells this summer, that I have not yet found a single day of the leisure I sigh for. Some very agreeable foreigners have been of our party, the Russian Prince Galitzin, and the most amiable Frenchman I ever knew, his *compagnon de voyage*.

We have a pleasant prospect in view, but whether it will take place, the uncertainty of human things leaves it not in my power to say; Mrs. Walsingham, Mrs. Garrick and I meditate a journey to the Lakes of Cumberland. To me, at least, whose eyes have not been feasted with the scenery of Switzerland, it will be a very new and interesting affair.

When do you take your flight to Mount Ephraim? Hitherto you have not lost much, for the country was never less delightful; but, since the rain, it begins to assume a new character of life and cheerfulness.

Pray remember me kindly to Mrs. Pepys, and desire the sweet little boy not to forget me.

I am your much obliged, &c.

H. More.

I am come to the postscript, without having found courage to tell you what I am sure you will hear with pain; at least it gives *me* infinite pain to write it—I mean the most open and notorious ingratitude of our milkwoman. There is hardly a species of slander the poor unhappy creature does not propa-

gate against me, in the most public manner, because I have called her a *milkwoman*, and because I have placed the money in the funds, instead of letting her spend it. I confess my weakness—it goes to my heart, not for my own sake, but for the sake of our common nature; so much for my *inward* feelings: as to my *active* resentment, I am trying to get a place for her husband, and am endeavouring to make up the sum I have raised for her to five hundred pounds. Do not let this harden *your* heart or mine against any future object. *Fate bene per voi*, is a beautiful maxim.

One of her charges is that I design to defraud her children of the money after her death;—and this to my face, the second time she saw me after I came hither. Poor human nature! I could weep over thee! Nothing but the sanctifying influences of religion can subdue and keep in tolerable order that pride which is the concomitant of great talents with a bad education.

I have this moment a letter from Madame de Genlis, to say she cannot come to Bristol.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. E. Carter.

Bristol, 1785.

You will judge of the satisfaction and comfort I have in receiving your letters, my dear Mrs. Carter, from the promptness of my answers. Yet I must confess that would sometimes be a very unfair way of estimating affection, as a thousand cross things often

prevent the accomplishment of the kindest intentions of that sort: and by a perverseness of circumstances, the dearest friend is sometimes neglected, while the most frivolous acquaintance engages one's time and attention.

I am rejoiced to find by a letter I have just received from Mrs. Montagu, that our dear Mrs. Vesey will have a competency, though nothing like the affluence to which she has been accustomed, and to which she had so good a right.

Indeed, my dear friend, I can judge by my own, of the grief and surprise you must have felt at the death of the Duchess of Portland. She was of the noble and munificent style of the old nobility. She is deservedly regretted, from the palace to the cottage; the poor deeply lament her, and *Majesty* has shed tears for her. Dear Mrs. Delany, I hear, sustains this heavy blow with the resignation which might be expected from the piety of her character; but she also feels it with a sensibility which might be calculated from the tenderness of her heart. You will be glad to learn that she is now with Mrs. Boscawen, at her villa, receiving such consolations as real friendship, a feeling heart, and a very solid piety can administer. I fear we must hardly expect to see her again.[1] Were you not a little surprised to hear that the duchess had left her nothing but her picture? I am told she is quite satisfied, as it furnishes the strongest proof that her attachment was a disinterested one.

I have been a good deal hurried and taken up

[1] Mrs. Delany lived till 1788.

lately, from having had a great deal of acquaintance at the Wells; and as water-drinkers have nothing to do themselves, they are very apt to invade the time of those who have. But I reward myself for these losses, by frequently enjoying the solid and instructive society of Lady Juliana Penn, whom I am so happy as to have within a little walk, and who is so good as to bestow her time upon me sometimes. Miss Penn is a charming girl, full of sense and information, without being so smothered with accomplishments as most of the young misses are; and which they impose upon you as a substitute for knowledge. They are full of care on account of Lady Charlotte Finch, and Mrs. Fielding, whose healths are not in a good state.

I am on the point of embarking on an expedition, which I figure to myself will be a marvellously pleasant one. I am going, with Mrs. Walsingham and Mrs. Garrick, to see the Lakes in Cumberland, &c.[1] I promise a great banquet to my imagination, in the enjoyment of that bold and romantic scenery, so far surpassing anything I have yet seen; though this country is not a tame one.

It seems Mrs. Montagu has given you a little sketch of our milkwoman's history; if she had not, I believe I should have spared you the vexation of knowing that your generous exertions and kind liberality have met with so cruel a return. I grieve most for poor fallen human nature; for, as to my own particular part, I am persuaded Providence intends

[1] This scheme was never carried into execution.

me good by it. Had she turned out well I should have had my *reward;* as it is, I have my *trial.* Perhaps I was too vain of my success; and, in counting over the money (almost £500.), might be elated, and think—"Is not this great Babylon that *I* have built?"

Prosperity is a great trial, and she could not stand it. I was afraid it would turn her *head,* but I did not expect it would harden her *heart.* I contrive to take the same care of her pecuniary interests, and am bringing out a second edition of her poems. My conscience tells me I ought not to give up my trust for these poor children, on account of their mother's wickedness. You know Mrs. Montagu and I are joint trustees for the money.

I am grieved to take up your precious time with this mortifying story. It will not steel *your* heart, nor, I trust, *mine,* against the next distress which may present itself to us; but there are many on whom I fear it may have that effect.

My sisters desire their best respects. Pray take care of your health; and believe me, my dearest Mrs. Carter,

Your ever affectionate and faithful,

H. MORE.

P. S.—I send you enclosed a little copy of verses by Mrs. Delany, written in her eighty-fourth year.

VERSES WRITTEN BY MRS. DELANY, IN 1784.

WHEN SHE WAS EIGHTY-FOUR YEARS OF AGE.

The time is come I can no more
The vegetable world explore;
No more with rapture cull each flower,
That paints the mead, and twines the bower;
No more with admiration see
Its perfect form and symmetry;
No more attempt, with hope elate,
Its lovely lines to imitate.
Farewell to all those active powers,
That blest my solitary hours,
Alas! farewell! but shall I mourn,
As one who is of hope forlorn?
Come, Holy Spirit! on thy wing
Thy sacred consolation bring:
Teach me to contemplate thy grace,
That hath so long sustained my race;
That various blessings still bestows,
And pours in balm to all my woes.
Teach me, submissive, to resign,
When summoned by thy will divine.

H. More to her sister.

1785.

Mrs. Garrick is gone to town again for one night, to go to mass, but I desired to stay behind. Mr. Pepys wrote me a very kind letter on the death of Johnson, thinking I should be impatient to hear something relating to his last hours. Dr. Brocklesby, his physician, was with him. He said to him a little before he died, Doctor, you are a worthy man, and my friend, but I am afraid you are not a Christian! what can I do better for you than offer up in your

presence, a prayer to the great God that you may become a Christian in my sense of the word. Instantly he fell on his knees, and put up a fervent prayer; when he got up he caught hold of his hand with great earnestness, and cried, Doctor! you do not say, Amen. The Doctor looked foolish, but after a pause, cried, Amen! Johnson said, My dear doctor, believe a dying man, there is no salvation but in the sacrifice of the Lamb of God; go home, write down my prayer, and every word I have said, and bring it me to-morrow. Brocklesby did so.

A friend desired he would make his will, and as Hume in his last moments had made an impious declaration of his opinions, he thought it might tend to counteract the poison, if Johnson would make a public confession of his faith in his will. He said he would; seized the pen with great earnestness, and asked what was the usual form of beginning a will? His friend told him. After the usual forms he wrote, 'I offer up my soul to the great and merciful God; I offer it full of pollution, but in full assurance that it will be cleansed in the blood of my Redeemer.' And for some time he wrote on with the same vigour and spirit as if he had been in perfect health. When he expressed some of his former dread of dying, Sir John said, If you, doctor, have these fears, what is to become of me and others? Oh! Sir, said he, I have *written* piously, it is true; but I have *lived* too much like other men. It was a consolation to him, however, in his last hours, that he had never written in dero-

gation of religion or virtue. He talked of his death and funeral at times with great composure. On the Monday morning, he fell into a sound sleep, and continued in that state for twelve hours, and then died without a groan.

No action of his life became him like the leaving it. His death makes a kind of era in literature. Piety and goodness will not easily find a more able defender, and it is delightful to see him set, as it were, his dying seal to the professions of his life, and to the truth of Christianity.

I now recollect with melancholy pleasure, two little anecdotes of this departed genius, indicating a zeal for religion which one cannot but admire, however characteristically rough. When the Abbé Raynal was introduced to him, upon the Abbé's advancing to take his hand, Doctor J. drew back and put his hands behind him, and afterwards replied to the expostulation of a friend,—'Sir, I will not shake hands with an infidel!' At another time, I remember asking him if he did not think the Dean of Derry a very agreeable man, to which he made no answer, and on my repeating my question, 'Child,' said he, 'I will not speak any thing in favour of a Sabbath-breaker, to please you, nor any one else.'

From the same to the same.

London, 1785.

On Friday I was invited to a very agreeable party at Mrs. Vesey's, to hear Mr. Sheridan[1] read. He gave us the beautiful, but hackneyed Church Yard Elegy, Jessy, Dryden's Ode, the Morning Hymn, and every thing that everybody could say by heart. He was sensible, but pedantic, as usual. He abused all the English Poets, because none of them *had written to the heart*. I was sitting between Soame Jenyns and the Bishop of Chester, both poets, and I was very angry with them that they did not defend the cause of the injured fraternity. They, on the contrary, accused me of pusillanimity. I told them, like Beatrice, 'I would I were a man,' but not being one, I did not care to say much in so large and learned an assembly. However, lest Sheridan should think himself victorious, if no one contradicted him, I did venture to say a little, referring him to the dramatic poets, Shakspeare, Otway, and Southerne; the tragic drama being here, as in almost all countries, the natural field of the pathetic poets.

The French ambassador yesterday at court, just at the drawing-room door, fell into an apoplectic fit. I wonder if it struck anybody present in any other view than that it would spoil his assembly last night (SUNDAY), the day on which he regularly

[1] Father of Richard B. Sheridan.

holds a faro bank! One would think they could not have had a more solemn and public summons to recollection. But the profligacy, folly, and madness of this town is beyond the conception of those who *do not* see it, and the patience of those who *do*.

On Monday we had a gala dinner at Mrs. Walsingham's. The Montagus, the Lord Primate, Lord Walsingham, the Bishop of Salisbury, Lælius, and others of that order; but it was too grand to be comfortable, and too numerous to be instructive.

From the same to the same.

London, 1785.

I believe I mentioned that a foreign ambassador, Count Adhemar, had a stroke of apoplexy, and that he was to have had a great assembly on the night of the day on which it happened; it is shocking to relate the sequel. It was on a Sunday. The company went—some hundreds. The man lay deprived of sense and motion. His bed-chamber joins the great drawing-room, where was a faro bank held close to his bed's-head. Somebody said they thought they made too much noise. Oh no! another answered, it will do him good; the worst thing he can do is to sleep. A third said, I did not think Adhemar had been a fellow of such rare spirit; palsy and faro together is spirited indeed; this is keeping it up! I was telling this to Mr. Walpole the other day, and lamenting it as a national stigma, and one of the worst signs of the times I had met with. In

return he told me of a French gentleman at Paris, who being in the article of death, had just signed his will, when the lawyer, who drew it up, was invited by the wife to stay supper. The table was laid in the dying man's apartment; the lawyer took a glass of wine, and addressing himself to the lady, drank *a la santé de notre aimable agonisant!* I told Mr. Walpole he invented the story to out-do me, but he protested it was literally true.

I am charmed with Professor White's Bampton Lectures, full of genius, learning, sterling sense, a manly style, and a good temper. The subject is a parallel between the life, character, and doctrines of Mahomet, and those of Christ; a subject to which he was naturally led by his studies as Arabic professor. Those writers who have depreciated the capacity of the impostor, have not served the cause of Christianity. For as they lower his claims to understanding, they raise his pretensions to inspiration.

You know I have often told you, that Sunday is not only my day of rest, but of enjoyment. I go twice to the churches where I expect the best preaching; frequently to St. Clements, to hear my excellent friend Burrows. By the way, it gives me peculiar pleasure to think that I there partook of the holy sacrament with Johnson the last time he ever received it in public.

It was very considerate in Mrs. Garrick, to decline asking company on Sunday on my account; so that I enjoy the whole day to myself. I swallow no small portion of theology of different descriptions,

as I always read when visiting, such books as I do not possess at home. After my more select reading, I have attacked South, Atterbury, and Warburton. In these great geniuses, and original thinkers, I see many passages of scripture presented in a strong and striking light. I think it right to mix their learned labours with the devout effusions of more spiritual writers, Baxter, Doddridge, Hall, Hopkins, Jeremy Taylor, (the Shakspeare of divinity) and the profound Barrow in turn. I devour much, but, I fear, digest little. In the evening I read a sermon and prayers to the family; which Mrs. G. much likes.

The Middletons inquired after you. They were at the bishop's. I did but just see Sir Charles. He stept in to us once or twice in the course of the evening, from the House of Commons which is close by, and so did two or three other members, to relieve themselves a little from the Westminster Petition; odious and tiresome subject! they say.

From the same to the same.

London, Monday, 1785.

Talking of politics the other night, Soame Jenyns said it sounded mighty pretty in an essay to talk of the governor of a free people, but when put into English, it only signified the governor of a people who would not be governed, which was the definition of the king of England. Mr. Walpole has been confined some time with a cruel fit of the gout. Mrs. Vesey, going to visit him in his great

chair, fell down stairs, and sprained her leg. I dined with her two days since, in a snug way, with only Mrs. Carter. *She*, poor lady, is lame with the rheumatism. Mrs. Montagu has kept her room these three weeks; so that the Bas Bleu is *very much out at heel.* I went and sat the evening with Mrs. Montagu, *tête-a-tête.*

As the oldest acquaintances, however humble in station, are always considered by me as having the first right to my services, I offered myself to our two friends the first day of my coming. I went next to the Bishop of Chester's, and we were vastly glad to see each other.

From the same to the same.

Thursday Morning.

Lord Bathurst has given me, for your book, two original letters of Voltaire's in English, one written to him when he was chancellor, and the other to his father above fifty years ago, to thank him for the civilities he received at his house when in England. My lord is very obliging, and has taken an infinite deal of pains to rummage out these letters from among his vast mass of papers. I have been there twice this week. Our blue stocking is tolerably well mended again. We have had a pleasant *Vesey* or two lately. Mrs. Carter, Mr. Walpole, and I, make our own parties, and ask or exclude just whom we like. Our last was a little too large, and had too many great ladies; and we have agreed to keep the next a secret; but poor dear Vesey is so

sweet-tempered and benevolent, that though she vows she will not mention it to anybody, she cannot help asking every agreeable creature that comes in her way.

Frivolous as the times are, I have some comfort in thinking that the monstrous attempt at bringing Macbeth into a dance at the Opera would not take. I was extremely outrageous at this, and said the other day to Lady Mount Edgecombe, that the times were so depraved I expected to live to see the Iliad cut down into an interlude. 'Yes,' replied she, 'and it will be the only way in which some of our young men will learn the classics.' The frequent fires here are dreadful. I have been to look on the ruins of the Thatched House; but sweet Wimbledon[1] is the most grievous loss. They went from London by fifties to plunder; and while the house was in flames, multitudes were dead drunk in the cellars. It makes one ashamed of one's species. 'Yet, there go I,' said holy John Bradford, when he met a man going to the gallows, 'but for the grace of God.'

I am just going to flirt a couple of hours with my beau, General Oglethorpe. Enclosed you have my letter written as from Jean Jacques Rousseau. I could not comply with your desire sooner, as Mr. H. ran away with it.[2]

[1] Lord Spencer's.

[2] This supposed letter was addressed to a gentleman who was fascinated, to a very dangerous degree, by the talents of that great, but corrupt, genius, and was accompanied by a trumpery picture of him, which she had picked up merely for this purpose. Madame de Stael having formerly presented Mrs. More with her work on Rousseau, she suffered a copy of this

LETTRE DE JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU, AVEC SON PORTRAIT.

Ame sensible! Voici le portrait d'un homme dont tu as su apprécier le mérite. J'étois digne de l'admiration de mon siècle, et je l'ai obténu; c'étoit peu; j'ai voulu qu'on me dressât des autels. Je pensois que le seul objet digne du cûlte humain étoit Jean Jacques. J'aurois voulu qu'il n'y eût eu que Jean Jacques dans l'univers; que lui seul tint lieu de tout le genre humain. N'ayant pû être l'objet de l'adoration des hommes j'ai voulu être celui de leurs persécutions; j'aimois mieux être persecuté que negligé; la calomnie m'outrageoit, mais l'oubli m'auroit assommé.

Je réunissois en moi tout ce que le cœur humain a de plus noble et de plus bas: Enthousiaste pour ce que la vertu a de grand, de sublime, d'impratiquable même, je me crûs autorisé à franchir les bornes prescrites aux âmes ordinaires. Ayant fait l'éloge de la chasteté j'ai vécu dans un commerce illicite avec une femme dont j'ai celebré la pureté. J'ai senti, j'ai écrit comme Platon, mais ma vie fût celle d'un homme ordinaire, d'un homme vil.

Tous mes goûts furent des passions; mais j'avois des accés de la plus sublime dévotion. J'admirois tout ce que la réligion avoit de brillant, mais je redoutois ce qu'elle avoit de pénible.

letter to be shown to her when she was in England, and had expressed an intention of visiting Barley Wood, that she might be fully apprised of her opinion of his character and writings.

Sensible, tendre, inégal, capricieux, inconséquent, j'ai fait l'apothéose du genre humain sans aimer les hommes. J'ai consacré à l'immortalité des gens méprisables, et j'ai maltraité ceux qui m'ont fait du bien. Me rendre service c'étoit me faire un affront sanglant; je savois pardonner une injure et non un bienfait.

Quant à mes écrits, celui qui pourra les lire sans ravissement doit avoir le cœur froid et dur, l'esprit borné et frivole. Quel feu divin! quelle passion! quelles graces naïves et tendres! Pour lire les autres auteurs il ne faut que du goût, pour savourer Jean Jacques il faudroit une âme; pour lire les autres il faudroit juger, pour lire Rousseau il faut sentir.

Je n'ai pas voulu faire du mal peut-être, et j'en ai fait; plus vain qu'incrédule je croyois n'aimer que la verité, et j'ai aimé encore plus la singularité; j'ai voulu me distinguer, j'ai voulu être philosophe, je me suis perdu dans l'abyme de la métaphisique.

Citoyen du monde! homme de bien! ami du genre humain! Philosophe, voilà les beaux titres auxquels j'aspirois; mais souvent quand je croyois débiter la morale je n'étalois que du sentiment; clinquant qui brille d'avantage mais qui n'a rien de solide.

From the same to the same.

Adelphi, 1785.

Boswell tells me he is printing *anecdotes* of Johnson; not his *life*, but, as he has the vanity to call it, his *pyramid*. I besought his tenderness for our virtuous and most revered departed friend, and begged he would mitigate some of his asperities. He said, roughly, 'He would not cut off his claws, nor make a tiger a cat to please anybody.' It will, I doubt not, be a very amusing book; but I hope not an indiscreet one: he has great enthusiasm, and some fire. The Bishop of Gloucester, (Dr. Halifax,) did me the honour of calling upon me. I have since been there of an evening, and we are become great friends; they seem amiable people.

I have had a great deal of conversation with Mr. Anstey. I found him obliging and polite, but he is one of those poets who are better to read than to see. I think him a real genius in the way of wit and humour; but he appears to be of a shy and silent cast, and to prefer the quiet solemnity of a whist table to talking parties. On Wednesday we had a great dinner at home, for the first time this year, Mrs. Garrick disliking company more and more. The party consisted of the Smelts, the Montagus, the Boyles, the Walsinghams, Mrs. Carter, Mr. Walpole, and Miss Hamilton. Though I like them every one separately, yet it was impossible to enjoy them altogether. I never desire to sit down with more than six, or eight at the outside,

at dinner. I have had an affecting business on my hands. The wife of Dr. Adams, Master of Pembroke College, is dead, and his friends prevailed on him to set out for London, to be out of the way during the last sad ceremonies; so he came to the hotel next to us, in order for me to devote myself to him as much as possible. Our first meeting was very affecting. I never saw anything so meek and so resigned. But it is a heavy blow at almost eighty!

We had a splendid dinner in Stratford place,[1] indeed much too magnificent, and too many people for comfort; all literati. Among them Sir Joshua, the two Wartons, and Tyrwhitt. Dr. Warton was, as usual, very enthusiastic and very agreeable. We staid till near twelve. Mrs. Montagu, in a whisper, engaged us to dine privately with her the next day; so we staid on purpose, and had nobody but dear Mrs. Carter; which I liked vastly. We spent the evening at Mrs. Vesey's last Thursday, with Mr. Walpole and Dowager Lady Townsend; a woman who has *said* more good things than any living person, but who, I believe, has not done quite so many. Poor Mr. ——. could not talk much; but he seemed to enjoy the conversation. When I shook hands with him, I said to myself, 'I shall never see you again;' and so it is likely to prove; for he has lain senseless ever since. Poor man! he has not the dispositions suited to his advanced age, and his near prospect of death. Soame Jenyns,

[1] Mrs. Walsingham's.

too, is in great trouble. We spent the evening agreeably together, and Mrs. Jenyns was taken that very night with a fever, and is dangerously ill. I tremble for an event which is to destroy an union of such perfect harmony, and put an end to an attachment which continues to be a passion very long after fourscore.

Sir Charles and Lady Middleton dined here last Tuesday, and in the evening we had a magnificent *bas bleu*, at which I think assisted almost every creature that adorns that fraternity. We had much pleasant and some profitable discussion.

From the same to the same.

Glanvilla,[1] *June* 16, 1785.

We left Teston on Monday. Poor Lady Middleton still in bed with a fever! the only drawback from a visit which was otherwise so delightful. It is a charming mansion. We spent the evening with Miss Hamilton; who, I fancy will have another name by the time you get this letter. I was much amused with hearing old Leonidas Glover sing his own fine ballad of 'Hosier's Ghost,' which was very affecting. He is past eighty.

Mr. Walpole coming in just afterwards, I told him how highly I had been pleased. He begged me to intreat a repetition of it. I suppose you recollect that it was the satire, conveyed in this little ballad, upon the conduct of Sir Robert Wal-

[1] Mrs. Boscawen's seat.

pole's ministry, which is thought to have been a remote cause of his resignation. It was a very curious circumstance to see his son listening to the recital of it with so much complacency. Such is the effect of the lapse of time.

I have rarely heard a more curious instance of the absence of mind produced by poetic enthusiasm, than that which occurred when the author of Leonidas made one of a party of literati assembled at the house of Mr. Gilbert West, at Wickham. Lord Littleton, on opening his window one morning, perceived Glover pacing to and fro with a whip in his hand, by the side of a fine bed of tulips just ready to blow, and which were the peculiar care of the lady of the mansion, who worshipped Flora with as much ardour as Glover did the muses. His mind was at the instant teeming with the birth of some little ballad, when Lord Littleton, to his astonishment and dismay, perceived him applying his whip with great vehemence to the stalks of the unfortunate tulips; all of which, before there was time to awaken him from his reverie, he had completely levelled with the ground; and when the devastation he had committed was afterwards pointed out to him, he was so perfectly unconscious of the proceeding, that he could with difficulty be made to believe it.

I spent a couple of evenings, the last week I was in town, with only Mr. Walpole and Miss Hamilton. The former read some productions of his own to us. He is gone down to Strawberry hill, where is his printing press, to collect all his works; which,

when bound, are to be sent after me to Bristol, to help towards making a library at 'Cowslip Green,' He likes the name, and says it is a relation, a cousin at least, to 'Strawberry Hill.' He likes the plan and drawing mightily; and so does Mr. Smelt, with whom I spent a pleasant evening, a day or two before I set out. The cottage has travelled about to them all in turn, so that they all know every creek and corner of the little mansion.

END OF VOL. I.